

A view from the Rectory Window August 2026

Opinions will probably be divided over the saturation of sport on television for the month of July. I was able for one Saturday in July to follow the football world cup and the rugby union championship from 6am in the morning until 10.00 at night – a day when Wales won their rugby match! However, the reason I mention this is to comment on the high visibility of Faith at the football world cup.

Many players have openly expressed their religious beliefs during matches. Spain's Lamine Yamal performed sujud, an Islamic gesture of gratitude to God, after scoring, while Egyptian player Mohamed Salah and Moroccan players have also celebrated with sujud, highlighting the presence of Islam on the global stage. Christian players have similarly demonstrated faith: German players Felix Nmecha and Jonathan Tah joined Curaçao players in a post-match prayer circle, and the U.S. team, led by Mark McKenzie, prayed together after victories. U.S. stars like Christian Pulisic, Matt Freese, Weston McKennie, and Cristian Roldan have incorporated faith into their routines, including Bible studies and personal prayers, emphasizing the spiritual dimension of their participation.

These personal expressions of faith on a very public stage are in marked contrast to the culture and social climate we are used to in Britain, certainly in my lifetime – although it is changing. My personal theory is that because of the reserved nature of the British, and our past traditions of corporate worship at school and church (when church going was common). The British are rarely comfortable with individual expressions of faith. Even so, perhaps it is pertinent to reflect for a moment on **2 Corinthians 4:13** 'Since we have the same spirit of faith according to what is written, 'I believed, and so I spoke,' we also believe, and so we also spoke.' We may not have a public stage or platform, but we can all speak up for the values of goodness, love, and faith.

Changing the context for those of the more horticulturally inclination, how many of these plants of the Bible do you know?

Pomegranates Song of Solomon Ch4v13, **Hyssop** 1 Kings Ch 4v33, **Onycha** (Red Rose) Exodus ch30 v34, **Madonna Lilly** Song of Solomon Ch 2v2, **Rue** St. Luke Ch11v42, **Figs** Genesis Ch3v7, **Olive** Genesis Ch8 v11, **Almond Tree** Ecclesias Ch12v5, **Vines** St. John Ch15v1, **Anemones**

St. Matthew Ch6v28, **Cedar of Lebanon** 1Kings 6v15, **Crocus** Song of Solomon, **Mandrake** Genesis Ch30v14, **Bay Tree** Psalms Ch37v35, **Opium Poppy** St. Matthew Ch27v34, and **Coriander** Exodus Ch16v31.

So, whether it is on the stage of 'life' or in the beauty and wonder of nature's garden, speak of the truth and faithfulness of God's love to all around.

Psalm 150:6 – "Let everything that has breath praise the Lord."

Rev. Richard