

November

From the Vicar.

Injustice is a tough thing to deal with. Whether it's coming back to your car to see that someone has scratched it or dented the door without admitting to it. Then there's the injustice of being dismissed from your post because you have stood up for what you believe is right but find you are powerless to protect your job against a power hungry boss. There is the injustice of the Hale Barns Square Planning Inquiry where a council and community having to send more and more money just because a developer wants his own way and his own profit. Where, even if we defeat him we will not be able to claim back our money from him.

We have only just had harvest and again there in the midst of our thanksgiving to God we have cause to view the injustice of a world out of balance. We have so much and they have so little. An injustice which becomes a little too uncomfortable to look at as we eat food out of season without batting an eyelid for the poorly paid grower.

But there seem to be greater injustices. The illness of a person we love and need. The illness heaped upon illness of those who seem to deserve it least. The injustice felt by the suffering and abused. The injustice of one nation singled out by another nation, one people or race placed in the crosshairs of another, simply because they are different.

November is a month where injustice stands squarely in front of us as we solemnly walk towards Remembrance Sunday. No more so than in recent times should we think long and hard about how our sense of injustice at the deaths of the thousands and thousands of men and women, who died in the World Wars, has been dulled by our failure in the Middle East. Something that every one of us should reflect upon, whatever our race, faith or nationality.

We approach Remembrance Day often with a real sense of injustice desperate that wrongs should never be forgotten and that selflessness unto death should be honoured and remembered for ever. But what of our part in the injustices of war?

When we think of the injustices we suffer at the hands of others do we allow our hurt to focus our view on our own acts of selflessness or dishonesty or hurt towards others? Or do we fix our gaze on what we suffer while never admitting to our own actions?

And when the big things hit, health fails, family breaks, tragedy falls then we turn to God and we say that he has not been just. Job, a man in the bible who though a good man, suffers the most terrible catalogue of disasters and sadness, knows that all too well and so we hear him say....

"Though I cry, 'I've been wronged!' I get no response; though I call for help, there is no justice.
Job 19 vs 7

God's answer to Job's cry is a long time coming and at times difficult to understand. But it is never unjust. While God and Job talk through the whole 40 odd chapters of this agonising book, what we see is a relationship where Job is able to speak openly and honestly to God about the things in his life that are most painful and the things where he feels he has been most wronged. God listens to Job rant and rave and shout and complain and cry. He listens with patience and with love and all the time wanting to

reassure Job that while he might not understand what is going on or be able to work it out. God does and can.

So injustice in life is just that – unjust and we don't deserve it, but the bible never promises that it will be any different. Some times we are the cause of other people's unjust suffering – how many times do we admit to that?

In all these times, though, God is present. That's why it is the religious leaders more than the civic leaders who take us through our local and national acts of remembrance. That's why the church is there for funerals and for times of healing of the heart. That's why in the end Job is able to say.

"I know that my redeemer lives!"

Yours in Christ,

Rev. Rob Hinton, Vicar of All Saints.