

LETTER FROM THE CURATE - SEPTEMBER 2011

A Season Under Heaven

When would you say is the start of the year? The obvious answer is 1st January, but that is too simple. The Church year starts in November with Advent. The financial year begins in April. Other faiths have different new year dates.

I always think that September is new beginnings. I suppose it is all those years at school and then as a teacher, with the start of the academic year. Do you remember new uniform, new pencil case, new regimes, and back to life-by-the-clock after a carefree summer?

However you shape your year I am sure you will agree they go round faster and faster, and time is such a precious commodity. It is marked by a shadow on a dial, the striking of a clock and the running of the sand, day and night, summer and winter, months years centuries, though these are all arbitrary signs. Real time belongs to God, and only he knows how much of it each of us is to have. That is a rather sobering thought, as are the words of John Ryle; "What we weave in time, we wear in eternity".

Do you know the old adage that the most important thing on a tombstone is the dash between the dates, because it represents all the things done during a lifetime.

The Bible tells us to "count our days that we may gain a wise heart " (Ps. 90 v 12) and to "enjoy our days and be glad in them" (Ps. 118 v 24). And then there is the beautiful song in Ecclesiastes chapter three which tells us our lives should be full and varied. "For everything there is a season under heaven". Find time to look it up during the month and reflect on how much of it applies to you. The only lost time is when we have not lived life to the full, for procrastination and sloth are the thief of God's time.

So as the new year starts for children and students, what plans have you for September? It is a good time for starting a new venture, taking up a new hobby, or perhaps considering going on the Alpha Course. It is a very special experience whether you are a longtime Christian, fairly new to the church, or merely interested in finding out what faith and spirituality are all about. It is also a splendid chance to ask questions and meet new people.

However you spend the month, may God bless your endeavours and activities, and help you to use your time to best effect.

Yours in Christ,

Lesley