



St Philip's Come & See

Sunday 22 January 2017

Third Sunday After Epiphany

Dear Friends

Exile is a significant theme in our Judeo-Christian tradition. There were two exiles for the people of Israel – both were traumatic. The tribes of Zebulun and Naphtali lay in border country and regularly suffered invasions at the hands of the Assyrians. They were surrounded by pagan nations and even in New Testament times it was thought of in a judgmental way because of their inclination to take on pagan ways and abandon covenant fidelity. The northern kingdom of Israel eventually disappeared forever in the Assyrian invasion and subsequent exiles of 722/721BC (see 1 Kings 13 - 2 Kings 17). In 587BC the Babylonians invaded for a second time, the first was in 598) and destroyed the city of Jerusalem and deported most of the leaders and the wealthy families. Some of those who went into exile 'by the waters of Babylon' eventually returned when King Cyrus of Persia defeated the Babylonians. These were enormous challenges to their faith in God, because how could God, who gave them the land as a covenant sign allow it to be taken away? Surely it was the land that made them the people of God? Jeremiah in particular reminded them that peace depended on their faith and not on the land. For us as Christians there is the sense in which we are sojourners in the world, exiled from our true home in heaven. But for the Jewish and Palestinian peoples this is still a lived reality. We continue to pray for peace in the Holy Land in these troubled times.

Martin

News

The Parish and Rectory are now connected to the world!

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A service of thanksgiving for the life of Fay Pankhurst will be held at St Philip's next Tuesday 24 January at Noon. Any assistance with refreshments after the service would be appreciated.

Breakfast – toast and good coffee will be served in the Lamerton Centre following the 8.00am Eucharist on Sundays. Don't forget the 10.00am Eucharist on Thursdays. This is another opportunity to place before God our needs, the needs of our parish and the world.

The Feast of Candlemas will be celebrated on Thursday 2 February, Eucharist at 10.00am followed by 'Festal' morning tea in the Rectory.

Ash Wednesday falls on 1 March. Please put this important date in your diary. If you have any ideas or preferences for a Lenten Study – times, resources etc please let me know.

Meetings of the Liturgy Group will resume on the third Sunday of each month following the 10.00am Eucharist. Clergy and liturgical assistants please make a notes of the dates in your diaries. Interested folk are also welcome to attend. At our meeting in February we will plan our observances of Lent, Holy Week and Easter.

The Pastoral Care Group will be meeting soon, as will a group to plan our Children's and Young Folk's ministry – further details next week.