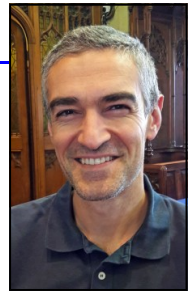




The Churchwardens Write

SEEN OR UNSEEN

“Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan and was led by the Spirit into the wilderness, where for forty days he was tempted by the devil” (Luke 4: 1,2).



Lent is the season during which we, as Christians, reflect on the temptations of Jesus.

It is an opportunity for us to draw closer to God through prayer and Bible reading. What could be simpler?

Well, actually, it can be very difficult! Prayer can be hard, even for the most devout, and even Jesus himself needed to spend time in prayer to connect with His Father and to hear His Father’s voice. He encouraged His disciples to follow His example and also taught them the Lord's Prayer as a way to pray when they struggled to find anything to say.

In addition to prayer, reading the Bible is central to the life of a Christian. When we read the Bible, we discover God's great love for us, and that He has a plan for each one of us. We discover how God longs to be part of our lives and how He wants to be with us on our life's journey. In Psalm 139 of the Old Testament we read that God made each one of us and that He knew us even before we were born. In the New Testament we read details of Jesus’ life and gain encouragement from Paul’s letters. Within the Bible’s pages lies a treasure trove of hidden pearls of wisdom. And unsurprisingly we find that the more we seek God through prayer and Bible reading, the more God does actually begin to reveal Himself to us.

Lent gives us an opportunity to “get right with God” and to draw near to Him. During Lent some choose to give up something meaningful as a way of an offering to God, although whatever we give up is as nothing compared to what Jesus ultimately gave up. In his letter last month our Reader, John, suggested we might give up something really precious to us - our time - and then use that time to visit an elderly neighbour or carry out some voluntary work.

But whatever we prayerfully decide to give up or take on during Lent, let us be motivated by our awe at God’s love for us, and let us remember that it’s not about earning points by doing things or collecting gold stars on some celestial chart. As Jesus says, “When you pray, do not be like the hypocrites, for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and on the street corners to be seen by others” (Matthew 6: 5). Whatever we do we should do it quietly and willingly because, be it seen or unseen, God knows.

Wishing you all a blessed Lenten Season.

David and Dejan
Churchwardens