

From the Chaplain...

A recurring message in the New Testament is the importance of living our lives out in the open. In the Gospel of Matthew, for example, Jesus encourages his followers to 'let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven' (5.16). Similarly, in this Sunday's lesson from the Letter to the Romans (13. 8-end), Paul informs his readers that 'the night is far gone, the day is at hand. Let us then cast off the works of darkness and put on the armour of light; let us conduct ourselves becomingly as in the day' (vv. 12-13). For Christians, nothing is hidden from God, and by extension, nothing should be hidden from the world. Consequently, we are called to live and act with total transparency. This is at once a daunting and liberating prospect. Daunting because who really likes the idea of our individual selves being subject to this level of scrutiny? Surely there ought to be some corner of existence where we can occasionally retreat, away from the prying eyes of both God and other people? But Paul is emphatic that Christians must live as though the last days are always imminent and divine judgment is at hand. And if we are prepared to do this, then we realise that the transparency demanded of us is in fact a liberation. This is because we don't have to pretend anymore to be something we are not, neither do we have to live in fear of being exposed. In this respect, the link between divine knowledge and human behaviour ceases to be a source of dread and instead becomes a chance to overcome the secretiveness and double-dealing that too often imprison us.

In recalling the death of her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II one year ago today, we also mark the accession of His Majesty the King. It is fitting that alongside our prayers of gratitude for the late Queen's many years of devoted service, we should also offer up prayers of good will for King Charles as he enters the second year of his reign. It is a day on which we are invited not just to remember but also to look forward.

This Sunday, the officiant and preacher will be the Revd William Chatterton. The music at the Choral Eucharist will be led by the choir, *With Cheerful Voice*, accompanied by guest organist Stephen Disley.

Yours faithfully,
Robert

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