

Vicar's Letter – September 2014

Beginnings and endings are very important in life. Starting is usually much easier than finishing. Often we enthusiastically embark on a new project only to see it shelved long before completion. A year before the Spanish Armada sailed for England in 1588, Elizabethan pirate, explorer and naval hero Sir Francis Drake sailed into Cadiz harbour to wreck the fleet of King Philip II. Before the attack he wrote a prayer:

“O Lord God, when Thou givest to Thy servants to endeavour any great matter, grant us also to know that it is not the beginning, but the continuing of the same unto the end, until it be thoroughly finished, which yieldeth the true glory.”

September is about endings and beginnings. The summer holidays are over, the evening temperatures are falling away and the schools and colleges return to study at the start of a brand new academic year. There are new challenges ahead, but before we are in too much of a hurry to enter Autumn, it would be good to reflect upon several key events of the Summer.

We were reminded of endings in life as we said farewell to Bea Wren in a Requiem Mass in church on 6th August. Bea was quite a private person, so it was intriguing to hear about her earlier life in a tribute given by a family friend in the service. Permission has been given for that address to be published in this month's magazine.

We have enjoyed two fabulous musical occasions in August. At the beginning of the month, we were treated to *The Heavenly Aerophone* – a recital and talk, given by John Davenport, on the All Saints Walker Organ. Then on 21st August, we basked in *Summer Light* - an enchanting concert of favourite classical pieces for string orchestra. Thanks are due to John, Caroline and all who planned and performed on the evenings.

I would also like to thank all those who participated in the All Saints' Soup Run. Feeding Agencies tend to close in August so it is important that there is ongoing provision. Many members of our community contributed food, money and time on the Saturdays throughout the month. Special thanks to Caroline Griffiths and Linda Trude for their commitment and skill in organising the All Saints' effort, which will have made a real difference to men and women living in very challenging circumstances.

Throughout the Summer the dire and desperate situations of many families in Syria, Iraq, West Africa, Gaza and the border of Israel have dominated the news headlines. We have remembered them in our daily prayers. In addition, from Thursday 28th August, the 7pm Mass became a regular Mass of 'Intention' for *justice, mercy and peace* in our world. For the time being, from the beginning of Thursday Evening Prayer to the end of Mass (6pm – 7.30pm), the Paschal candle will be lit and placed on the Sanctuary step as a focus for prayer, reflection and meditation. Appropriate prayers for justice, mercy and peace will also be available next to the candle.

During the Autumn, members of the Ministry Team and the PCC will be exploring possible new ideas for our regular Sunday Evening Services. In common with most Anglican churches across the Diocese (and the nation), numbers are not strong and many of us believe that the time is right for fresh approaches which will be attractive, inclusive and authentic to the All Saints' way. Please pray for this process and, indeed, share any ideas you may have!

In *Four Quartets* (Little Gidding V), T.S. Eliot wrote:

*What we call the beginning is often the end
And to make an end is to make a beginning.
The end is where we start from.*

In Christ, we can have confidence that our past, present and future, and our *endings* and *beginnings* are secure in his love.

Yours in the service of Christ,

Kim Taplin

Beatrice Wren 1930-2014

My first memory of Bea was when Mary, my mother, took me to Bea's house to be tested for my Brownie laundress badge.

Bea came from a real Windsor family. She was brought up there and attended Windsor County Girls' School, at the time situated in Queen Victoria's old butler's house on the edge of Windsor Great Park.

At school Bea learned to play the piano and became a beautiful pianist. Music continued to be a great love of her life and she was a keen member of the Windsor and Eton Choral Society.

She was not, however, allowed to join the Guides as her mother wanted her to concentrate on her homework.

Having missed out on guides, she later persuaded her mother to let her join the Sea Rangers and this began her long association with Guiding, through which she met some of her closest friends.

She helped at many guide camps and went on annual ski trips to the Girl Guides' chalet in Adelboden in Switzerland with Kath Saunders, Ann Pither and other friends from Guides.

At the time Bea owned an Austin 35 car – known to friends as TUE (from its registration number), an unbelievably small car by today's standards. I still have this picture of Bea driving it all the way from Windsor to Switzerland.

After leaving school, Bea initially joined a bank. She later left and worked at the Magistrates' Court, eventually becoming clerk to the Justices after passing her solicitors' exams.

She was a regular attender at All Saints' Church in Dedworth and played the organ there for many years. She worked with their church youth group and together with Ann Pither accompanied the Windsor Youth Group on the inaugural visit to Goslar in Germany in 1952. This annual visit is still taking place today.

Bea was not what you would call a sporty person but she loved cricket and frequently took the coach up from Windsor to watch matches at Lord's.

She also loved tennis and was a regular visitor to Wimbledon. On two occasions she took me in the ever-faithful TUE to London. We slept on the pavement overnight – not a comfortable experience- to get tickets for the final day. I seem to remember that Stan Smith and Nastase were playing in one of these matches and we were standing in the front row right by the net.

Bea was a real and long-standing friend of Mary and Ken my parents.. This was another friendship that developed from Guiding. Bea went on regular holidays to St Agnes in the Scilly Isles with Kath Saunders and Mary and Ken and also had caravan holidays with them.

When Mary and Ken left Windsor and moved to Devon in 1974 Bea visited them regularly, sometimes en route to the Scillies. On a number of occasions she brought her mother to stay with Mum and Dad while she was on holiday.

Over the years Bea developed a close interest in the Bristol Old Vic and after the death of her mother moved from Windsor to Bristol where she had already made many new friends.

It was lovely to meet so many of her new friends when we celebrated her 80th birthday at the Old Vic. It is so nice to see so many of them here to say our last goodbyes to her.

Tribute given by Susan Garnet, a long-standing family friend at Bea's Requiem Mass on 6th August 2014.

Bristol West Deanery Alpha Course

Autumn 2014

hosted by Christ Church Clifton

Alpha is a series of interactive sessions exploring the basics of the Christian Faith and the meaning of life. It has been successfully used as a programme of basic Christian education in churches of all traditions and on all continents.

The launch party, including a live jazz band, two course meal and talk will be held at 7.00pm on Wednesday 24th September in Christ Church Clifton. The course will then run each Wednesday night up to 26th November (with a half term break on 29th October).

Each week the **Alpha** course begins at 7.00pm with drinks and a meal at 7.15pm. There is an after-dinner address followed by some discussion around the tables. Each evening will finish by 9.30pm. There is NO CHARGE for the course.

The idea is that each church in the Deanery can have its own table, so *All Saints* people can sit together as a group. If you are interested in taking part, or would like to invite friends and/or colleagues to join you, please sign up on the notice in the church entrance or let Fr Kim know by 14th September at the latest.

BRISTOL CATHOLIC SOCIETIES ASSUMPTIONTIDE FESTIVAL 2014

This annual celebration of the Glorious Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary took place on Saturday 16th August; the Right Reverend Roger Jupp, Superior-General of the Confraternity of the Blessed Sacrament presided at both Mass, in Bristol Cathedral where he was supported by twelve concelebrants, and at Vespers and Benediction, in the Lord Mayor's Chapel. Bishop Jupp's outstanding sermon at Mass is reproduced elsewhere in this magazine.

Thanks are due to the choir from St Mary & St John, Bathwick, to the servers - many from All Saints - to readers, and to all those who contributed in their various ways. It is pleasing to report that numbers at both services showed an increase over last year.

Next year's Festival is on Saturday 15th August 2015.

Chris Verity

Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary (16th August 2014 Bristol)

"Those whom God predestined he also called; and those whom he called he also justified; and those whom he justified he also glorified" (Romans 8:30)

Later this month, on 27th August, we commemorate St Monica, the mother of St Augustine, the great bishop of Hippo in North Africa, who strove so valiantly and forcefully to establish the Church in the faith and make that faith understood at the end of the 4th century and into the 5th. Monica, his mother, was a Christian and was unceasing in her prayers for her son's conversion from the unsettled and immoral way life which characterized his early pagan years. She said that she shed many tears for him. But the prayers and tears of that devoted and faithful mother eventually won through and Monica saw her son converted and then baptized at Milan in the year 387 by St Ambrose, its bishop. Monica died not long after in that same year. Augustine wrote about it in his famous *Confessions*. He and his brother were with her as she lay dying; his brother said that he wished that they could bury her in her own land and not in a strange country. But, when she heard that, she said to them both "Lay this body wherever it may be. Let no care of it disturb you: this only I ask of you that you should remember me at the altar of the Lord wherever you may be."

On this feast of another mother, Mary, the Mother of the Lord and the mother of all Christians, these are words that remind us of our eternal destiny, a destiny which is founded upon the resurrection of Jesus Christ which teaches us that, despite death's inescapable sorrow, it is not a sorrow without hope. As those who have been baptized into the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, we ought always to view everything, both life and death, from God's point of view. Our true home is heaven because the life of the baptized is one that now has an eternal destiny. No wonder St Paul was in a hurry to be off, anxious to run that race and win that prize which he believed awaited him in Christ. And this is why St Paul wrote those words in chapter eight of his letter to the Romans which I mentioned at the beginning of this homily. Let me remind you of them. "Those whom God predestined he also called; and those whom he called he also justified; and those whom he justified he also glorified." The words that precede them are significant and help us in our understanding of what St Paul is saying. He is writing about the Christian life, what he thinks of as life in the Spirit. "We know that in everything God works for good with those who love him, who are called according to his purpose. For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the first-born among many brethren." So, then, St Paul is saying that Jesus is the first-born of many brethren, and he means us, all those who have become one with Christ in baptism. And all of us, suggests St Paul, God knew from the very beginning, calling us and willing us to be made like Christ, conformed to Christ, putting on the character and life of Jesus, being redeemed by his death and resurrection and given the hope of heaven. So, being in this way made like Christ,

“conformed to Christ” is how St Paul puts it, “those whom (God) called he also justified; and those whom he justified he also glorified.” And for those of us who are baptized, the life we have is eternal life in Christ Jesus. That is far sweeter than anything we know on earth. Already we are living in God’s perspective, which is heaven; already we are living with Christ his life; already in this life we are marked with the sign of the cross of Christ which means we have put on Christ’s own life like a robe; already we are upon that journey in this life which will lead, ultimately, through the grave and gate of death, to the fulfilment of that promise which is the glory of seeing God face to face.

God’s desire, his eternal will, is to glorify human nature. He made human life sweet from the first; that sweetness was lost because of sin and human selfishness and the image of God that he shared with human nature was spoilt. But Christ, the Son of God, was born of human nature and shared our human nature so that our human nature could recover the image of God and, once more, share God’s life. God’s desire, his eternal will, is to glorify human nature. In Christ this is possible. And that is why we are baptized in Christ so that we might have the hope of heaven.

In today’s feast of the Assumption of Mary, the bearer of God’s eternal Word, (her “Falling Asleep”, her *Dormition*, as the Orthodox call it), what we are celebrating with enormous joy is this hope of heaven, this promise of glory. We are rejoicing that Mary, the first to receive the good news of our salvation, the first to hear the Gospel through the message of the angel, has, after death, been received into glory, because God is always faithful and raises up the lowly, particularly, of course, she whom the angel greeted as most highly favoured in God’s eyes. Today, then, we are seeing Mary the Mother of Christ from God’s viewpoint, from the heavenly perspective and not our own.

“Those whom God predestined he also called; and those whom he called he also justified; and those whom he justified he also glorified.” What Mary now shares with God is because Christ is her salvation. That is true for us as well. What is hers now is our hope, too. So she is for all Christians that great sign of the Church’s life and hope, and her faith and obedience are the model and pattern of our Christian discipleship.

The earliest portrayals of Mary’s assumption show her on her deathbed with the apostles and disciples grieving around her. Her soul, a miniature of her body, rises from her body. And there, above, her heavenly body receives the crown of glory from her Son. Her dying and her passing from this life, then, is not a sorrow without hope. From God’s point of view it is the sign of the hope that he has given to the whole Church in and through Jesus Christ, Son of God and Son of Mary.

“Behold, all generations will call me blessed, for he who is mighty has done great things for me,” sang Mary in her song of exultation, her Magnificat. As we remember her at the altar of the Lord - she who is the first amongst Christians and the first amongst saints - may the Lord, who has raised the Mother of his Son to glory, do great things for us as well, sinners though we feel ourselves to be, yet still destined for the glory of the saints. For, through her - through his taking of our humanity from her flesh - “God became what we are so that we might become what he is” (*Irenaeus*). And, because of this great and wonderful truth, like the Mother of all Christian people, all generations will call us blessed.

Sermon preached by +Roger Jupp

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LUNCH**

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IN THIS MONTH...SEPTEMBER 1895

[Canon Bromby wrote his pastoral letter, dated August 25th, from Aber, North Wales, where he was on holiday. The subject was *Retrenchment* - i.e. cutting down on expenses].

My dear Friends,

That word is not a pleasant one, but the thing it symbolizes has from time to time to be bravely and wisely faced. A number of us feel that the two directions in which retrenchment in our own case can be carried out are the modification of the Choir School, and the reduction of our Staff of Stipendiary Clergy. There has been no thought, however, of coming to a final decision on either of these points until the matter has been fully laid out before a general meeting of the Congregation. The Churchwardens and myself propose to call together such a meeting at the beginning of October. Due notice of the exact date will be given during the present month, and full information as to the proposals to be laid before the meeting will be published in the October number of our Magazine. At present I will only say that no-one wishes to "do away with the Choir School." That which many of us feel to be necessary is simply the reconstruction of it on the basis of a Day School, still, as we are thankful to feel, under the direction of Mr Richards. The final settlement of the question of

the reduction of our Staff must also very largely depend upon the action taken by those attending the Meeting. I know that I may trustfully commend all these matters to your kindly and patient consideration, and, above all, to your prayers. I write these words from my peaceful retreat, where I am thankful to say I have been granted gifts of renewed health and strength. I hope to return to you refreshed and invigorated by the middle of the month.

Believe me, dear Friends, your affectionate Vicar,
H.B. Bromby

THREE MISSIONARIES - BIRINUS, GREGORY, AND ALLEN GARDINER

In the first of September week the Church remembers three missionaries, and I would like to look briefly at them .

First at St Birinus who is remembered on Tuesday, 4 September. Birinus was a Frank who felt called to be a Missionary. He landed in 634 at the ancient port of Hamwic – now part of Southampton and while he was there he founded St Mary's Church. He had been consecrated by the Bishop in Genoa and then Pope Honorius 1 sent him on a mission to convert the Saxons of the West of England to Christianity.

The Venerable Bede tells us,

But when Birinus reached Britain and entered the territory of Wessex, he found the people completely heathen, and decided that it would be better to begin to preach the word among them rather than seek more distant converts.

It was in 635 that the Saxon King Cynigils allowed him to preach, because Cynigils wanted to form an alliance with the Christian king Oswald of Northumbria.

Again Bede tells us,

Birinus therefore evangelised the province and when he had instructed its king, he baptised him and his people. It happened at that time that Oswald, the most holy and victorious king of the Northumbrians, was present, and greeted King Cynigils as he came from the font, and offered him an alliance most acceptable to God, taking him as his Godson and his daughter as wife. The two kings gave Birinus the city of Dorchester for his episcopal see, and there he built and dedicated several churches and brought many people to the Lord by his holy labours.

After Birinus death around 649, his remains were buried in Dorchester Abbey. On 4 September 690 his relics were translated to a new shrine in Winchester Cathedral.

On 3 September the Church remembers Gregory the Great, Bishop of Rome and a Teacher of the Faith. Gregory was born in 540 and he was the son of a Roman senator. Initially he followed a career in the government and became a Prefect of the city in 574. However, when his father died he resigned his office, sold his inheritance and became a monk. In 579 the Pope sent him to Constantinople as representative to the Patriarch. He was there for seven years before returning to Rome and he was elected Pope in 590.

This was a time of political upset in Roman church, but Gregory proved to be an astute administrator and diplomat and secured peace with the Lombards. He sent Augustine and forty monks from his own monastery to re-found the English Church. One of those monks was St Jordan who is still remembered and venerated at our Cathedral in Bristol.

Gregory's writings were pastorally oriented and his spirituality was fired by a deep love and desire for God. For Gregory, desire was a metaphor for the journey into God – he is sometimes known as the 'Doctor of Desire'. As Pope he said he was 'Servant of the servants of God'.

He says, in a homily of his,

My preaching is mediocre, and my life does not cohere with the values I preach so inadequately. I do not deny that I am guilty, for I recognise in myself lethargy and negligence. Perhaps my very awareness of my failings will gain me pardon from a sympathetic judge.....

My mind is in chaos, fragmented by the many and serious matters I am required to give attention to. When I try to concentrate and focus my intellectual resources for preaching, how can I do justice to the sacred ministry of the Word? I am often compelled by virtue of my office to socialise with people of the world and sometimes I have to relax the discipline of my speech. Inevitably I find myself listening to their mindless chatter. I begin to enjoy lying back where beforehand I was conscious lest I fall in myself.

And yet although I am unworthy, the creator and redeemer of us all has given me the grace to see life whole and an ability to speak effectively of it. It is for the love of God that I do not spare myself preaching him.

I pray that all who preach the Word feel the same as Gregory.

The third missionary remembered this week is Allen Gardiner, and he is remembered on 6 September. Allen Gardiner was an interesting man, he was born in 1794 and joined the Royal Navy as a young man, and in those days it would be young – boys joined as midshipmen in their early teens. He resigned in 1826, and on the death of his wife in 1834, he dedicated himself to missionary work. He pioneered a mission to the Zulus in South Africa for the Church Missionary Society, and he founded the city of Durban. Later he went to South America to investigate the possibility of evangelism amongst the indigenous tribes. He travelled all over and in 1844 he founded the South American Mission Society. He and seven other missionaries died of starvation in 1851 on the shores of Tierra del Fuego.

My stepfather's younger cousin has spent most of his adult life working for SAMS as a missionary and doctor in the Brazilian interior, though sadly his dedication to his missionary work led to the break up of his marriage.

Allen Gardiner was dedicated in his desire to evangelise the South American tribes. Although his attempts ended in failure he did not give up. On 7 August 1851, a month before he died of cold, hunger and thirst, shipwrecked on the desolate shores of Tierra del Fuego, he wrote in his journal:

Eleven months to the day we left England for this country, and we have been graciously preserved through many dangers and troubles. The Lord, in his providence, has seen fit to bring us very low. In his infinite wisdom, mercy and love, he has removed many of his blessings – but for our good. For my part, I have abused the manifold gifts of God. I have taken for granted his daily mercies. Lord have mercy on me a sinner and keep me so humble under your mighty hand that I may not despise your goodness or faint, but rather wait upon your grace to profit from this and every other act of your providence. For I sense that there is a deep purpose in my present trial and I pray that I may discern it for my own good. Help me to see myself in the light of your holy word, and to search and try my heart by it. May your Holy Spirit bring within me a true repentance which will bear fruit in the graces of love and faith and obedience. And let not this mission fail, even if we are not permitted to labour in it. But raise up others who will bring the saving truths of the gospel to the poor, blind heathen around us.

Today SAMS, The South American Missionary Society still seeks to fulfil this vision of Allen Gardiner.

These three men whom we remember in first week of September were filled with such love and passion for God that they could do no other than go and preach the Word of God to those who have not heard it, and also to inspire again those who have lost touch with their faith. We owe so much to them and to others like them.

Liz Badman, Lay Reader

**SERMON PREACHED AT ALL SAINTS, CLIFTON FOR St BARTHOLOMEW
(Trinity 10) at 8am Mass and 11am Mass on Sunday 24 August 2014**

Isaiah 43. 8-13

Acts 5.12-16

Luke 22.24-30

In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. AMEN

Recently the television has been full of action from the Commonwealth Games with loads of medals won by England, and other countries. Even more recently we have had the European Athletic Championships. Now I have to confess that I do not watch sport on television, I would far rather read a book, though I am proud of any medals that we win. Our medal winner's names will be remembered for a time and will go down in sporting history.

But today, in great contrast we are remembering someone from 2000 years ago, whose achievements are almost lost to history. An Apostle, who tradition tells us did good things, but who is really only heard of when included in a list of the apostles. This seems perverse by the standards of today's world, but when has the Church ever been rational in the world's eyes? Let's face it, the only sure claim for remembering Bartholomew is his presence at the Ascension of Our Lord, recorded at the beginning of the Acts of the Apostles.

Bartholomew is named in the lists of the Twelve in all three of the Synoptic gospels, always with Philip. However, he is not mentioned in John's Gospel, but elsewhere in the Gospels Philip is paired with Nathaniel, who does not appear in the lists. Most scholars assume that Bartholomew and Nathaniel are one and the same, so he may or may not be one and the same as Nathaniel. John mentions Nathaniel a couple of times, so we can glean a little more information about him.

So who is this Bartholomew/Nathaniel, and what can we learn from him?

The name Bartholomew or in Greek 'Batholomaios' comes from the Aramaic 'Bar-Tolomay' meaning 'son of Tolomay'. 'Son of the furrows'. Could he come from a family of ploughmen, farmers? However, as Nathaniel he is introduced to us as a friend of Philip, who is sceptical about the Messiah coming from Nazareth, '*Can anything good come out of Nazareth?*' In John's gospel as Nathaniel he appears under the fig tree, and again at the end of John's gospel as one of the disciples Jesus appeared to at the Sea of Galilee after the Resurrection. John also tells us, immediately after Jesus met Nathaniel that he was from Cana in Galilee and was present at the wedding in Cana. What an amazing start to a friendship to have Jesus answer your cynical question 'Can anything good come out of Nazareth', by performing a miracle on your home territory.

As one of Jesus's close disciples Bartholomew, along with the others, would have spent time following Jesus around Galilee, maybe farther afield, absorbing all that Jesus did and taught. We hear a lot about some of the disciples and so tend to ignore or forget the others who are only mentioned now again by name, not by action. But the silence of Bartholomew's actions should not be ignored.

Bartholomew fled with the other disciples at Jesus's arrest and crucifixion. But he was with the group of disciples who after a night of hopeless fishing saw a man appear on the shore telling them to cast the net on the other side. There was a miraculous catch of fish He and they recognised Jesus, the risen Jesus with breakfast for them on the shore. Jesus was no ghost, ghosts do not eat, he was indeed risen from the dead.

Bartholomew witnessed the coming of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost. After Pentecost we do not know for certain what happened to Bartholomew after these events. but we can be pretty certain that he would have gone out and proclaimed the Gospel, he would have probably done acts of healing as well.

However, there are certain traditions surrounding him: It is said that someone called Pantaenus of Alexandria was in India in the late 2ndC and found a Hebrew gospel according to Matthew, which had been left behind by Bartholomew. So it seems he spent time in India, possibly in the Bombay area. Eusebius of Caesarea in early 4thC and St Jerome in late 4th century also testify to this.

Then there is another tradition that he was flayed alive while on missionary work in Armenia. Also Jerome and Bede knew of a Gospel of Bartholomew, which is now lost.

There are churches dedicated to St Bartholomew – Barrie and I were married at St Bartholomew's in Failand. And of course there is St Bartholomew's hospital in London. Well that is all we know of him from Scripture and from Tradition, but there is much to learn and appreciate.

I think he was a special person in his faithfulness and dedication. He went to India, and what a trek that must have been, travel overland for most people in those days would have been on foot, he would have stopped on the way and preached the Gospel. It would have been a long journey taking months maybe years, when I looked at the maps I was impressed, taken aback by the terrain he would have passed through. Travellers usually travelled in groups, caravans, but sometimes he may have had to travel alone. Just think of the dangers.

He then came back through Armenia, where he converted Polymius, the king of Armenia, but Polymius's brother Astyages then ordered Batholomew to be flayed alive.

The Qur'an mentions Jesus's disciples and though does not mention them by name, just calls them 'helpers to the work of God', but Muslim exegesis and Qur'an commentary name them and include Bartholomew in the list of Disciples.

We see that Bartholomew was not a 'celebrity' apostle, like Peter or James and John. In our Epistle reading we hear that the Apostles were all together in Solomon's Portico, but we only hear Peter's name mentioned. So what do deduce from all this?

Well he certainly moved in his views – from scepticism to loyal following and deep faith. And that is what he was – the 'son of the furrows' was faithful and determined to tell as many people as possible in as many places as possible of the Good News. A patron saint of those who do not reach celebrity status, but just keep going.

How can we learn from this man? How can we be like him? What is that makes someone live devotedly to God, day in and day out? As a good Jew he would have read the scriptures and studied the law. So first we should bathe and become immersed in God's word, reading the bible daily, seeking out the wisdom in the Old Testament, being concerned with the prophecies, really studying the meaning behind the parables and being at home with their obscurity. Bartholomew must have studied the Scriptures, all good Jews did and he would have heard Jesus quoting the scriptures. It seems he wrote his own Gospel which was known in the early Church, so he really would be steeped in what we know as the Old Testament.

Devotion to the Scriptures makes us want to share them with others and to go out and about among all sorts of people and this is what Bartholomew did, he travelled further than any of the other disciples, apart from Thomas. He would have met all sorts of people on his travels, he met with royalty and converted a king to Christianity. Many of us travel, many of us mix with people of high influence, many of you are in, or have been in, important roles, meeting and speaking with people, but have we been seeking God at the same time?

Bartholomew was a man of prayer, he must have been to have his faith and determination to tell people of this amazing man who he had spent 3 years of his life with. We should pray daily, and most, if not all, of us do; we have a Daily Office Team here at All Saints of people who take it in turn to say Morning or Evening Prayer each day here in church. We are the only church in this area that is open for the daily office every day of the week all year round. God fills people like this with the spirit of understanding in that these people pour forth words of God's wisdom which directs them in their daily life. God does this as they thank God in prayer and dwell on His mysteries.

The outcome of this is that famous people, although their names may be remembered for a very long time, will often in the end be remembered more for the way they lived than for their achievements. This is the same for us, for those who have lived a quiet life that is immersed in prayer, in reading the scriptures, focused on God and living a Christ-like life, telling the Good News, and seeing Christ in our neighbour. People like this live on in our collective memory and become part of our heritage.

St Bartholomew was unremarkable, but he was loyal, he grew from cynicism to dogged faithfulness that was so strong he was prepared to be martyred for his faith. We give thanks for Bartholomew, and we celebrate our routine of ordinary discipleship, routine devotion which comes from immersion in God's word and prayer which leads to growth in God's wisdom; and to a willingness to go wherever and do whatever God calls us to do, faithfully.

AMEN

Liz Badman, Lay Reader



FRIENDS OF ALALAY (SANTA CRUZ)

Registered charity no. 1123425

SUMMER 2014 NEWSLETTER

Friends of Alalay continues to be very busy and this newsletter is a mix of fundraising activity and good news from Bolivia!

The "Night at the Opera" was a great success – thanks to the Rotary Club of Bristol and the Welsh National Opera singers. Many thanks also to Cara and James who managed to run, cycle and swim their way around the Bristol Triathlon course raising lots of money for Alalay, and to the Jones and Robinson families for their well-attended fundraising teapot quiz, walk and tea party. There really are so many ways of helping the ex-street children to help themselves.



We have just heard the great news that all of the adolescents who we are supporting through vocational training this year have passed every single module to date! Our three chefs have completed their latest stages (traditional bakery, confectionery and pastry making). One is now starting chocolate-making, and the other two are working hard on salads, where they are enjoying creating their own recipes.

Our two mechanics have passed the electronic injection, basic electrics, diesel and transmission modules. Now they are studying applied mathematics. Claudio's dream is "to be a famous mechanic one day" and he is very motivated and punctual! And our nurse is in the final stage of her training. She has finished the theoretical and practical parts of her course, and is now revising hard for her end of year exam in November.

All six of these adolescents are finishing their schooling during the evenings, whilst also preparing to become independent in the next few years, helping with the younger children at the welcome houses, doing homework and housework, having a social life ... and generally not getting enough sleep!

The serious economic challenges mentioned in the last newsletter have encouraged staff to explore yet more ways of generating Alalay's own income. During this coming month (their Winter holidays) they will be moving the bakery (currently located at the aldea) to the city, where the oldest children will learn to bake bread, both for internal consumption and for sale at local events. Clearly our adolescents studying to be chefs will be a great help in this! The carpentry workshop continues to flourish, with an entire bedroom suite, a dining table with twelve chairs and a set of benches, just a few of the orders for the coming weeks.

It's also recently been party time in Bolivia, for the Independence Day celebrations. This photo shows a girl previously supported by Alalay (she now lives with her family after successful reintegration) and her classmates, dressed in a variety of traditional regional costumes, ready for the Independence Day parade and dances at her school.



Annie Syrett, Bristol – August 2014

www.alalay.co.uk