



THE RISK OF ADAPTING

Dear Friends,

As the temperatures rise and the crickets crescendo, the desire to slow down, stay close to a body of cold water and move less rises in proportion! Yes, summer is here. A time when one knows that all of those projects and developments that need pushing through the Greek system... are not going to budge an inch for the next month. It's a time at HTC when we look forward to seeing old friends at church who are back on the island for a few months; the usual busy-ness of the church week eases up for a few weeks and everyone takes a few weeks to contemplate the best way of keeping cool while dealing with the seasonal demands from the flood of tourists.

And most of this is the same as ever!

KEEP CALM & CARRY ON

Things do feel a little more normal in some ways here - apart from the social distancing, the lack of hugs and the facemasks - people are out and about; town and the beaches are busy-ish; many of us are looking after visitors and tourists. Even church on Sunday has developed a new pattern and a rhythm of its own - in church, on zoom, on-line. It was a real gift that I was able to hand over the reins for a couple of Sundays and everyone did such a wonderful job. All in all, it feels like we are... adapting. We hear so much talk about "the new normal" - and maybe this is it. But then isn't this just what human beings are so incredible at doing... adapting. We get used to things. Keep calm and carry on! While this is certainly a very useful survival trait, we do need to be cautious about what we are prepared to adapt too and what we can easily lose in the process.

One of the strangest books in the Bible is the book of Judges in the Old Testament.



Parts of the story would make Quentin Tarantino blush! If you don't believe me, read again the last few chapters! It's the story of people who have become used to being lost, leading a kind of undirected existence; a strange time that felt very transient and unsettled. The whole book ends with the following verse, "In those days there was no king in Israel; all the people did what was right in their own eyes." Without a sense of cohesion and direction, the path to chaos was too easy to take and the darker side of humanity was quick to rise to the fore.

I worry about the risk of "adapting" to a new normal where we think that the only consistent thread in our lives is the daily reporting on the latest case statistics and the latest round of government directives to deal with them. Is it right to adapt to a kind of "stasis" where life is on hold as we put things off for a less confusing time? Is there a danger of falling into limbo or becoming frozen in the headlights, fearful to act as we read about these strangest of times.

RELEASED INTO NEW LIFE

I hope not. In fact, when it comes to our spiritual journey through life nothing has really changed. We are still called, loved and blessed by our Father in Heaven, forgiven and released into new life by our Saviour and empowered by the real presence of the Holy Spirit in our lives. We are still called to love God with all our hearts, minds, souls and strength and to live thankful lives in His service. His call on our lives, to grow in our capacity for love and compassion is unchanged. Our salvation and future lives with our Resurrected Lord remain just that... our future; and by His Grace we are assured that nothing will separate us from this.

So, although there are complications in our daily lives that we do have to adapt in order to continue to protect each other, our focus and our deepest priorities remain unchanged. We simply have a new challenge in working through the detail! We know that if we do fix our eyes upon Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith, we will be given the guidance and direction we need to continue to live positively with the meaning and purpose the King-

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dom of God brings. Unlike those poor folk of the time of the Judges, we do have a King who is Lord over all and it is under His gentle rule our lives sit.

So I pray this month that whatever inconveniences, difficulties and challenges we face, we will continue to feel and respond to the power of the Spirit within us, renewing us and raising us to joyful service in His name.

With every blessing,

Jules



We will continue to provide online 'Together and Apart' services, as well as the live Sunday service. There are also prayer meetings on Wednesday and Friday mornings. Please contact us, if you would like details of how to join us.

<https://sites.google.com/view/holytrinitycorfuonline/home>

Cartoons (with thanks to Reverendfun.com)



Thanks to Carl Serkland 08-13-1999
JUST ANOTHER BEAR WE HAVE TO CROSS



Thanks to Benoit Paquette (See Genesis 6-8) 08-26-1999
YES, I'M AWARE THAT OUR PROJECT
DOESN'T MEET YOUR BUILDING CODE ...
TELL YOU WHAT, JUST GIVE ME A WEEK ***

*** It's not just HTC that has to face building regulations!!!

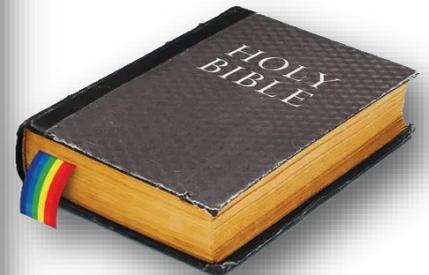
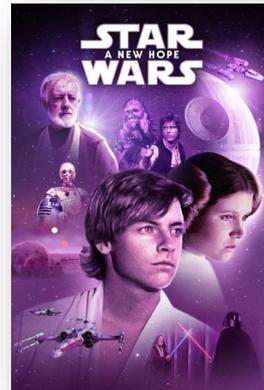
WHO ARE YOU?

*Our roving reporter went to find out more about
PETER HURLEY (our Zoom guru)
This time it was face to face (well behind the masks!)*



PULSE: *Place of birth?*
PETER: **Dublin**

PULSE: *Favourite film?*
PETER: **Star Wars IV**



PULSE: *Tea or coffee?*
PETER: **Tea**

PULSE: *Best bit of the Bible?*
PETER: **John's Gospel.**

PULSE: *Watching or playing sport?*
PETER: **Watching - or playing basketball**

PULSE: *First pet?*
PETER: **Snowy the Rabbit.**

PULSE: *Dream place to live?*
PETER: **Corfu!**

PULSE: *Last book read?*
PETER: **'The Choice' by Dr. Edith Egar**



PULSE: *Fav fruit?*
PETER: **Strawberries.**

PULSE: *Fav worship song/hymn?*
PETER: **Thine be the Glory.**

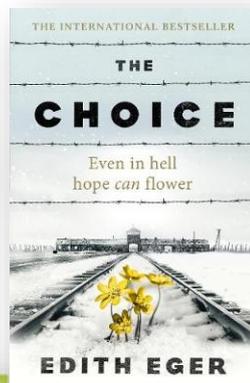
PULSE: *What luxury would you take to a desert island? - You can have power.*

PETER: **My laptop and network-attached storage.**

PULSE: *(I didn't say he could have WiFi)*

PULSE: *You're married with two daughters. What's your pet hate in a house full of females?*

PETER: **Having to wait to get a word in edgeways!!!!**



Cricket in Corfu. Can you spot 12 differences?



Αγία Παρασκευή - ST PARASKEVI - A Christian Martyr.

When Pauline lead the service at HTC on 26th July she told us the history behind the Saint who is celebrated and remember on that date. Whist we don't celebrate and revere Saints in the same way as the Orthodox Church it's informative to the history being celebrated by our neighbours.

Paraskevi was born in a village near Rome about 140AD, likely towards the end of the reign of the Roman Emperor Hadrian. Her parents, Agathon and Politia were Christians of Greek origin, and had prayed for many years to have a child. When Politia, finally bore a child, born on a Friday, the Day of Our Lords suffering. They named the baby girl Paraskevi, "Friday", which in Greek means "preparation (day) for the Sabbath." (Mark 15:42).

From childhood she obtained an excellent education from both secular and Scriptural instructors. She was also very knowledgeable in the field of philosophy. Bolstered by her Christian upbringing she often conversed with other young women about Christianity, trying to strengthen their faith in the new religion. Many distinguished families wanted this beautiful, educated rich women to marry their sons. After the death of her parents, at the age of 20 Paraskevi gave away all her possessions and became head of a Christian Community of young virgins and widows (convent). She began to preach the Christian faith, at the age of 30, left Rome, travelling alone knowing well the dangers that lay ahead and ministered to many in the cities and villages leading them from idolatry to faith in Christ.

Her travels took her to a village, Therapia, Asia Minor (modern day Turkey); where she was arrested by the soldiers of the Emperor Antonius Pius, and brought to trial. The charge was of blasphemy and that her words were the cause of all the ills that had befallen the empire. Antonius attempted to convince Paraskevi to denounce her faith, and even offered to marry her and make her his empress. Paraskevi refused and quoted Jeremiah 10: 11. "These gods, who did not make the heavens and earth, perish from the earth." She was beaten and tortured by having a steel helmet lined with nails placed on her head and tightened with a vice. No pain seemed to affect her and her endurance caused many to convert to Christianity. Paraskevi asked God to give her strength to face the terror that awaited her. Eventually at his wits end, Antonius Pius demanded Paraskevi to be immersed into a cauldron of boiling oil and tar. She emerged unscathed. When she was accused of using magic, Paraskevi responded by flicking the liquid into the Emperors face. He was blinded, desperately he asked for her help. Antonius Pius regained his sight. The miracle moved him to convert to Christianity and set Paraskevi free. Thereafter he never persecuted Christians again.

After the death of Antonius Pius in 161AD, the laws changed once again under the Emperor Marcus Aurelius (161-180). A plague struck the Roman people (Antoine Plague) many including the Emperor, considered the Christians responsible for angering the (pagan) gods. Paraskevi was arrested again in a city governed by a man named Asclepius, who threw her into a pit with a large snake. Paraskevi however, made a Sign of the Cross and the snake fell dead. Just like Antonius Pius, Pasaaskevi's miracle converted Asclepius to Christianity, he released her, and she continued to travel from city to city preaching the Faith.



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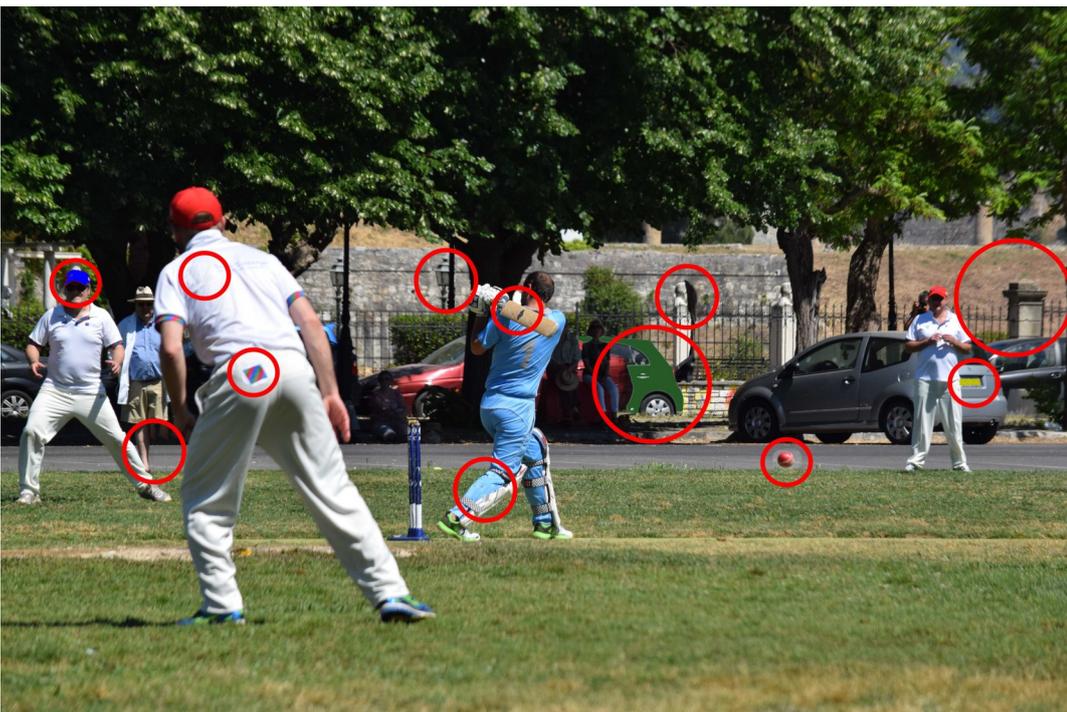
Finally, back in Rome Paraskevi was arrested for the last time by a Roman official Tarasius and taken willingly to the Temple of Apollo. Upon entering the temple, Paraskevi made the Sign of the Cross and all the idols in the temple were destroyed. Instead of converting the onlookers to Christianity, they became enraged, beating Paraskevi and dragging her out of the temple. The idolaters demanded Tarasios to kill Paraskevi. She was convicted and condemned to death by beheading. Paraskevi requested to be left alone for a few moments so that she might pray for the last time. Afterwards the roman soldiers returned and executed her.

Paraskevi died in 180AD, her body was taken eventually to Constantinople. According to the tradition of the people of Epirus, Paraskevi was not martyred in Rome but on the banks of the River Acheron where in Thesprotia a Monastery of Ag. Paraskevi stands today. According to local tradition the headless body of the saint was entombed there. The Monastery still operates but as a female convent.

Paraskevi is commemorated as Patron Saint of the Blind. Today (26th July) in Churches in Greece and around the world that bear her name are holding a Matins Service which is celebrated with the Divine Liturgy of Saint John Chrysostom with Scripture Readings from:- Galatians 3:23-45 and Mark 5:24-34.



The bell tower of the Monastery of St. Paraskevi near Sgourades (Σγουράδες).



SPOT THE DIFFERENCE?

How did you get on?
All 12?

PULSE PRAYERS



Heavenly Father, when we meet together your people, your family in our worship we sing your praises. Your kingdom come.

Heavenly Father, you created us, you are the healer of our souls and bodies, hear our prayers and save us from the raging threat against the world. For this has covered the entire globe, the fear of death surrounds us, have mercy Lord and cleanse the dangerous effect of the Covid virus and heal all people. We pray especially for those places where it has escalated, the USA, India, Mexico, South Africa, Argentina and Iraq.

In these difficult times help us to obey, learn the discipline of not crowding into others lives. Teach us to savour this time as a gift from you to grow in ourselves. Teach us patience dear Lord. Thank you for all those doctors and nurses who are caring for the sick and the medical staff who themselves are dying, give them strength and health and nurture their needs at this time. We ask you for protection over our lives as we too pass through stages of grief, denial and anger in disbelief at the state of the world.

We pray for our churches and the Christian community that we will continue to serve you. We thank you for Holy Trinity, our spiritual home. Bless our families near and far, keep us safe under the guidance of your love. Bless Jules, Trish and their family. We thank you for all their efforts in keeping us together during this difficult time.

We pray for the heads of the Christian church. Help them to unite in thought and word to unify to help the poor and all those facing isolation, the elderly and the unemployed. In the words of 'Our Father', there is a line, 'Give us this day our daily bread'. We pray for all who are hungry and neglected, especially the war-torn countries of the Middle East, Zambia, the Yemen and Africa. We pray for those who have fled their countries in search of a new life. Comfort all those who are in desperate situations. We lift to you those who are escaping persecution or conflict having fled death, torture or prostitution.

We pray for our countries government leaders. Give strength and wisdom to all in authority. Shed your light where there is darkness, corruption and dishonesty. Help each nation to restore the harmful things we have done to our world. Let your peace reign in our hearts, our lives and over the world. Lord so many millions of people have lost members of their families to this Covid virus. We pray for those who mourn. Lord console all those hearts today that overflow with grief. May they know your peace and comfort. Amen.

Rita Alamoanou



Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God.

Phil. 4:6

FRUIT and GIFTS



PART THREE - MINISTRY

So far in this series we have looked at the greatest gift and fruit of the Holy Spirit - love; we have reflected on the gift that St. Paul would have each of us desire - that of prophecy, understanding and sharing insight into God's Kingdom ways for His people. This third article is going to look at the second gift in one of Paul's lists of gifts of the Spirit taken from Romans 12:6-8. It's worth reading, as always, the build up to this list of gifts so here are the few verses that lead up to it:

³ For by the grace given to me I say to everyone among you not to think of yourself more highly than you ought to think, but to think with sober judgment, each according to the measure of faith that God has assigned. For as in one body we have many members, and not all the members have the same function, so we, who are many, are one body in Christ, and individually we are members one of another. We have gifts that differ according to the grace given to us: prophecy, in proportion to faith; ministry, in ministering; the teacher, in teaching; the exhorter, in exhortation; the giver, in generosity; the leader, in diligence; the compassionate, in cheerfulness.

So the second gift in Paul's list here may, at first, seem strangely generic and vague. The gift is... ministry. Paul expounds the use of this gift by rather unhelpfully added that it is to be used... in ministering! It looks like we're going to need to dig a little deeper elsewhere to understand this gift!

The Greek word here is one that has been transliterated into the church and used through the centuries to describe a particular office in the church... the word is *diakonia*, from which we get the word Deacon. At its heart, this word carries the meaning of service. So Paul, after love and the gift of prophetic understanding places service in the highest regard.

A minister is a servant; ministering is serving.

So how is it that "service" is a gift of the Holy Spirit? It doesn't sound very exciting or supernatural! Here we have the awesome power of the resurrection living within us and what are we going to do with it? Serve?!

The fact that we can even think like this points us to the truth of why the gift of service/ministry is indeed a spiritual gift. As always with Jesus, we are called to look beyond our own needs and emotions to those of the people around us. Jesus calls us to be servants as indeed he came to serve. Remember these words from Jesus in Matthew 20:

²⁵ "You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great ones are tyrants over them. It will not be so among you; but whoever wishes to be great among you must be your servant, and whoever wishes to be first among you must be your slave; just as

the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve (διακονέω), and to give his life a ransom for many.”

FRUIT and GIFTS



There’s that word again. Jesus invites us to join in His ministry/service and being able to do this with a servant heart and a desire to serve others is where the work and power of the Holy Spirit truly comes into play. It silences our more natural tendencies to serve ourselves and replaces them with the desires of Jesus’s heart to serve others.

It’s why St Paul in our first passage can tell us not to think of ourselves “more highly” than we “ought to think”; the danger is we begin to think that this ministry of Jesus we share is all about us!

So what form does this gift of service/ministry take?

First and foremost, the greatest service/ministry we share with our Lord, is drawing others into a relationship with God. Like prophecy, this is a service we can all share. Just think of how precious our own relationship is with God. Remember how amazing grace truly is. Think on how our faith gives our lives a true bedrock of hope and joy. What better service can we offer to others than to help them to know this for themselves, if they don’t already. Sharing the ministry of Jesus in calling all people into a relationship of Grace with their Creator and to know the releasing friendship of Jesus and the empowering presence of the Holy Spirit... this is service indeed!

It is always so important that we do this in a way that has the other person at the centre; that the help and support we offer is empowering and re-

leasing to help another person find *their* relationship with God not ours. Think of the different conversations Jesus has in the Gospel of John - always on the other person’s terms. It’s how we need to approach others; each person is unique and on their own personal journey.

Sometimes this may mean being part of a very significant step for someone... helping them to invite Jesus to be their Saviour, encouraging them to experience the presence and power of the Holy Spirit; at other times it might be a smaller but no less significant step in helping to remove a barrier or misconception that has caused them to keep their distance. Exactly what that step is and how we are called to act at a particular time is the gift of the Holy Spirit. We simply need to have a humble, gentle heart and obedient will to serve as we are called to and to speak as we are directed. But there is no doubt that the greatest service we can offer anyone is to help them take a step closer to their Saviour and Friend.

The second aspect of service/ministry is similar to the first but is directed to our brothers and sisters who are already part of the body of Christ. Again, our first acts of service are to encourage each other in our spiritual journeys; to encourage each other to pray, to worship, to let our faith grow. Of course, teaching plays an important part in this (more next month) but the spiritual gift of service within the church is more than words and the provision of guidance. Service to each other is about genuine care and compassion. Look how St. Paul continues after the Romans passage (page 8):



⁹ Let love be genuine; hate what is evil, hold fast to what is good; love one another with mutual affection; outdo one another in showing honour. Do not lag in zeal, be ardent in spirit, serve the Lord. Rejoice in hope, be patient in suffering, persevere in prayer.

It's a beautiful exhortation to genuine Christian living. We serve/minister to each other, by living in this way. It's not always easy to find the time and energy to support our second family(!) but that is what the church is; who we are. We serve each other when we share each other's burdens in prayer and practical support. We serve each other when we delight in each other's successes and joys.

We are not naive... we know what a challenge life can be with the worries and anxieties that are a very real part of our lives. But we know too that all these aspects of life can work for good or ill in our lives. We serve each other when we become vehicles of the Holy Spirit through which we can experience hope and encouragement and where we are constantly reminded of the grace and love that surround our lives. This is the service/ministry we all share with each other.

And finally, service/ministry is about sharing in the real practical "stuff" that needs to be done. St. Paul continues the Romans passage by ending with this:

¹³Contribute to the needs of the saints; extend hospitality to strangers.

Service is hands on. Remember when the first "deacons" were called in Acts? The problem they faced was a very practical one - they couldn't distribute the food to those in need quickly and fairly enough. Stephen, the first martyr and one of those seven deacons called to take responsibility for the practicalities of the church is described like this in Acts 6:8, ⁸Stephen, full of grace and power, did great wonders and signs among the people." All part of the service!!

The truth is that love and commitment tend to roll up their sleeves and get stuck in! Here again, we need the power of the Holy Spirit to inspire and motivate us. Too often we can feel too reluctant, too busy, too tired. I am sure that I have mentioned before a very wise lady, a retired paediatrician, who had a very busy and demanding career, saying in a talk she once gave that whenever she had felt a little low or depressed (she worked a lot with terminal cases) she would go and do some-

FRUIT and GIFTS



thing for someone else. Service gives meaning to our lives in the way that self-oriented living cannot do.

The longer I have the privilege of serving in our Lord's church the more impressed and humbled I am by the consistent and faithful service that people offer in their own way to the church. Whether it is in administration or managing buildings, in keeping the church beautiful or playing an important role in worship - all of these acts are transformed into holy offerings before God when they are undertaken as a service/ministry. There is a different dimension to their significance as the whole body of Christ works and serves together.

So this is the third gift of the Spirit: service/ministry; to the world, to each other, to the practicalities of being the church. On reflection, it feels like there is a pattern building up in these gifts and fruit of the Spirit. Love - the greatest gift exemplified by our Lord's self-giving sacrifice of love to bring in the Kingdom and the Resurrection Life; Prophecy - being able to see through the Lord's eyes and to glimpse just how His Kingdom of love is growing around us; Service/Ministry - acting to see that prophetic vision of love being made real through us.



What's on at Holy Trinity Corfu

Sun	2	10:30	Family Communion at HTC & On-line (inc AGM)
Wed	5	9:30	FB Prayer Group
Fri	7	09:30	Prayer at HTC & FB
Sun	9	10:30	Family Communion at HTC & On-Line
Wed	12	9:30	FB Prayer Group
Fri	14	09:30	Prayer at HTC & FB
Sun	16	10:30	Family Communion at HTC & On-Line
Wed	19	9:30	FB Prayer Group
Fri	21	09:30	Prayer at HTC & FB
Sun	23	10:30	Family Communion at HTC & On-Line
Wed	26	9:30	FB Prayer Group
Fri	28	9:30	Prayer at HTC & FB
Sun	30	10:30	Family Communion at HTC & On-Line



Links





<https://europe.anglican.org/prayer-diary/prayer-diary>



<https://www.ics-uk.org/Pages/Category/prayer-diary>



<http://www.theagiot.com/>



<https://enimerosi.com/en>



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We are happy to accept prayer requests for inclusion in Pulse or in the morning service. If you are requesting prayer for someone other than yourself please make sure you have their permission to be mentioned publicly.

*Please remember the submission **deadline for PULSE is 25th of each month**. Articles, news, information etc. received after this time may not be included and will be carried over to the next edition if appropriate. Thank you.*

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