

The Parish Church of Saint George



PARISH MAGAZINE

An open door in the heart of the City



*Fair waved the golden corn, in Canaan's pleasant land,
When full of joy, one shining morn went forth the reaper band.*



OCTOBER 2021

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From the Rector's Desk



Dear Friends in Christ,

It has been very good to have the choir back again after the summer break to provide the music for our Sunday Eucharist. We have 6 new probationers as well as a few boys who have moved into the back row. A few of our young men are heading off to college and university and I would say a special word of thanks to them for all that they have contributed to the choir over the years and wish them every success as they continue their studies at third level. Please remember Hector King, Ben Heatherley and Hugo Boitel in your prayers.

With the Covid 19 situation still somewhat uncertain due to the Delta variant, we have decided not to reinstate Evensong at the moment. Mr Falconer and I will keep the situation under review and as soon as it is safe to do so we will recommence our Sunday Evensongs again.

It is my intention to hold our annual All Souls' Requiem on Thursday 4th November at 7.30pm. I also intend to revise the list of the Departed, as we do about every five years. A new list will be prepared and if you wish a name to be included, then print it clearly on the sheets in the Narthex. Please note that the Requiem will begin at 7.30pm this year and not at 8.00pm as in previous years.

I would like to extend our sympathy to our good friend Fr Tom Layden SJ whose mother Bernie died on Tuesday 21st September. We offer our prayers and condolences to Fr Tom, his sister Angela and brother Oliver at this time.

Finally, I would like to thank all of you who sent good wishes and messages of support during my recent surgery. I am now on the mend and am very grateful for your kindness and support.

Yours in Christ

Brian Stewart

The Cardinal, the Carnival and the Clock

Paul McLaughlin



Joseph, Cardinal MacRory had been a long time in heaven by the time the annual carnival started visiting the Belfast GAA park named in his honour. The late Cardinal had been a fierce man for the Gaelic games, a fervent supporter of the Spaniard Generalissimo Franco and just as fierce in his condemnation of all things Protestant. ***‘The Protestant Church in Ireland is not only not the rightful representative of the early Irish Church, but it is not even a part of the Church of Christ’.*** He certainly wasn’t a man to mince his words, according to his memoir ‘The People’s Primate’ and reading that booklet recently, with its less than ecumenical views, brought back thoughts of happier times.

We were lined up, fifteen eleven-year-olds, in our football positions, our maroon jerseys like best wine under the fluorescent light of the classroom as Brother Hanley told us what we had to do to win the game. “You’re going to be playing in MacRory Park, lads. It’s named after a great man of the church and you’re going to make a holy show of that crowd from Park Lodge primary school. Get out there and get stuck into them.”

Looking back, that doesn’t sound like the most tactically astute team talk ever given, but we cheered like grey seals in a fish shop, fired up and ready to slaughter the middle class boys from the other side of the city – the good side according to most people who knew these things.

MacRory Park, with its high, grey concrete walls had been a forbidding place to me as I passed it on my way to Mass each Sunday and remained so that afternoon as the ‘seals’ mentioned earlier were clubbed senseless by a much bigger and better team. I played there in other more successful matches, but with its tin hut for changing and a scarcity of grass throughout the length and breadth of its pitch, ‘MacRory’ wasn’t built to make memories. Not until the Carnival came along.

The little travel alarm clock was on page 445 of Freeman’s Sales Catalogue, glossily photographed in colour showing a handsome face outlined by Roman numerals that folded away neatly into a brass and saffron painted hard case. It was a marvel and I loved it as much as my mother did. “We must get one of those, Tommy”, she said to my father. I was delighted until she went on, “When that old girl with the two bells gives up the ghost, we’ll get one of those wee dainty ones”.

I kept my disappointment under wraps and joined my pals for the first night of the October carnival. It was already getting dark and

the gaudy lights of the big Ferris wheel could be seen for miles around. 'MacRory' was already packed when we arrived. The lorries and wagons of the fairground people were circled to one side like the Sioux Indians in the pictures, while the big wheel spun slowly against the sky, the Waltzer waltzed perfectly, and the dodgem cars bounced and crashed noisily, even over the raised voices of hundreds of children and nearly as many grown-ups.

I felt the five sixpences in the hand I kept closed tightly in my trouser pocket. Sprazzies we called them, and I had a fistful for the fair.

One stall caught my eye before I had a chance to join the long queue for my favourite – the bumper cars. The Hoopla Stall. Here a tall man in a striped waistcoat and a straw hat waved a cane and shouted how great the prizes on offer were. I couldn't resist because there in front of me, among ornaments and colourful fancies like bubble bath and bottled perfume positioned on individual wooden blocks was a little travel clock, a twin of the one in the catalogue in its face, but with a beautiful, brown leather case.

The five sixpences disappeared like snow off a ditch as my fifteen shots at that coveted target bounced clear and wide and hopeless. Were the hoops made deliberately smaller than the targets? It made no matter. There had been no ride on the dodgem cars and a glum walk home in the rain from a sodden 'MacRory', but one of my first wages from my part time job a year later bought my mother a brass antique-looking travel alarm from H Samuel the jeweller's; twenty five shillings, but priceless.

(Continued from page 7)

not just the thought that counts and the love that goes with it, they are fun to choose and compose. So, do start now to give joy before they are obsolete, especially as all true romantics will tell you texts and e-mails are somehow just not the same and lack affection. Perhaps the most pleasurable use of postcards is for papering the walls of the smallest room in the house, instead of lavatory, a beautiful word in itself, you go to the much more sophisticated Art Gallery. Mr Francis Kilvert, the Welsh curate, was the first to do this in 1898. It is of great historical interest and tourists flock to see this classic W.C. in North Wales.

Terence Mayne

POSTCARDS Terence Mayne



St. Cuthbert's Church, Great Salkeld, Cumbria.

Interestingly, Les and Hilda sent a PC from Chippenham: "Just to let you know we arrived safely in Ed's car. A good journey, weather mixed, but fine this morning. We are going to Calne. Last night we went to a bingo hall where Barbara won a set of cake tins. Our turn on Saturday - whoopee. You don't know what you've missed not coming here." Another from Bert and Susie in Khartoum reads "Hotel, food and health good. Hot. Love. B and S XXX." Not exactly newsless, as we are happy to learn the couple did not foolishly travel 2,000 miles for discomfort and frostbite.

So it was, Francis Kilvert, a Welsh curate, who facilitated such brevity, for it as he, tired of rising at 5.00am in his pyjamas, writing long letters with alert mind, came to the conclusion the recipients just glossed over them, never to remark on his esoteric observations. Cleverly he solved this problem by inventing the postcard in 1870, which proved a popular godsend for the small demand it puts upon the writers, leaving school at 14; none of the rigmarole and layout of a letter that daunts the untrained. Incidentally, he made the first reference to AIRMAIL when he wrote, on 3rd October of that year, "How odd all the news and letters we get from Paris coming by balloon or carrier pigeon." Now, to bring this line of thinking to today, it is hard to imagine anyone sending, let alone collecting, so physical an object as a postcard in 2121.

This last century postcards have provided the world's most complete visual inventory. Few things people or places have not ended up at some time as a subject, loosely falling into the following categories: Feminism, aviation, other transport, cinema, advertising, architecture, fashion and comic. They are always a witness of their time, defining life rather than mirroring it, giving a more human picture than any other medium; random people, clothes and behaviour, making everyday life difficult to fake.

There are collectors, deltiologists, U.S.A. and cartophiles, French. Neither words having caught on here. To give examples, if you collected all the Royal Mail official pc's from the beginning in 1973, you would have 4,000 or so, and the same, believe it or not, for specialists in say, goats, teddy bears, Guinness, and the Titanic. What is the point of a post-box if nothing comes through it but junk mail and requests? BUT!! How uplifting to get from someone, somewhere, a beautiful card regardless of the non-news written. It is

(Continued on page 6)

THANK YOU



On 20th June, Edel McInerney, a choir parent and mother of Fionn, abseiled down the Europa Hotel, in aid of **TinyLife** a Family Support charity.

Following the 11.00am service on 27th June there was a retiring collection in aid of **TinyLife**, which also recognised the courage of Edel in abseiling down the Europa. £604.25 was raised for **TinyLife** and the following letter was received from the charity.

Dear Douglas,

I wanted to thank you for transferring £604.25 from St Georges Church congregation re: Edel's abseil.

Edel did brilliantly to fearlessly scale the front of the Europa Hotel, some 130 feet and we are extremely grateful for her hard work and efforts in fundraising.

Your support is greatly appreciated and will allow TinyLife to provide vital Family Support Services to families of premature and sick babies.

Kind regards,

Valerie Cromie

Head of Fundraising & Communications, TinyLife



THE UNEXPECTED Jeffrey Johnston

I have often noticed that what makes a holiday memorable, is the unexpected event that happens. My wife and I were spending a few days in Keswick and staying at a hotel on the town's main square. We spent a morning at the Botanical Garden and then found a cafe, overlooking the lake, for tea. When we returned to our hotel, we found a busker had taken a stand under a tree on the main square and was entertaining a small crowd. However, it was not the usual 'guy with a guitar' but a fashionable young lady, using a recorder for backing music. She was singing soprano solos from classical operas and to a high standard. We learned later that she was a music teacher on holiday. Keswick had already impressed us, but the busking opera singer was an added delight, that we will remember. Some years earlier we had visited Kylemore Abbey, while on a visit to Connemara. It is a substantial estate with a large lake, a walled garden and a mansion house currently occupied by Benedictine nuns. Near the house there is an impressive gothic chapel. Mitchell Henry, who built the abbey in the 1860s was on holiday in Egypt with his wife, Margaret, when she caught Nile fever there and died. On his return, he had the beautiful chapel built in her memory. As we bought our tickets at reception, the clerk told us there would be a short choir concert at 11.30am in the chapel. So, after seeing the walled garden, we made our way there. Soon a group that looked like tourists, all with rucksacks, wandered in. They turned out to be a college choir, from Corpus Christi, a town on the coast of Texas. They sang five pieces very competently. Two of them were spirituals, one of them new to me. It was a delightful surprise to hear such high quality singing in such a perfect setting. I spoke briefly to a member of the choir and he told me, "With this conductor, there is no missing practices!" We finished our visit to Kylemore in the gift shop and headed for our hotel, with the rhythm of the spiritual ringing in our ears: "Soon and very soon, we're going to see the King. Soon and very soon, we're going to see the King, Soon and very soon, we're going to see the King. Hallelujah, Hallelujah. We're going to see the King."



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My God, How Wonderful Thou Art

- FW Faber (1814-63)

Fr. Faber was one of the pioneers of the Oxford Movement of the 19th century and like his colleague John Henry Newman, eventually left the Anglo-Catholic party and embraced the Roman Faith, becoming identified with the Brompton Oratory Church, London - a great centre of Roman Catholic preaching once upon a time.

He was a dedicated, sincere, hard working priest, widely acclaimed for his piety and much respected for his deep religion.

He wrote a number of hymns and in the field of hymnology sought to do for Catholics what Cowper did for Evangelicals. Some of his hymns in common use are "Faith of our fathers" (sung widely in U.S.A.), "Souls of men, why will you scatter?", "Hark, hark my soul", "O come and mourn with me awhile", "My God, my God and can it be", and the subject of this article "My God, how wonderful Thou art."

Faber has been severely criticised in his poetry as being too sentimental and flabby and for his excessive use of the word "sweet". "Hark, hark my soul" is one of his most condemned hymns and Archbishop Wm Temple was overheard to remark that for him, its existence was "a minor but quite indisputable part of the problem of evil."!!

Here is one of his hymns, possibly unknown to most Church of Ireland folk:

1. "My God, my God and can it be
That I should sin so lightly now,
And think no more of evil thoughts
Than of the wind that waves the bough?"
2. I walk the earth with lightsome step,
Smile at the sunshine, breathe the air,
Do mine own will, nor ever heed
Gethsamane and thy long prayer.
3. Shall it be always thus, O Lord?
Wilt Thou not work this hour in me
The grace Thy Passion merited,
Hatred of self, and love of Thee !
4. Ever when tempted, make me see
Beneath the olives' mean-pierced shade,
My God, alone, outstretched and bruised
And bleeding, on the earth He made.
5. And make me ,feel it was my sin,
As though no other sins there were,
That was to Him who bears the world.
A load that He could scarcely bear.

May I suggest you go a stage further and read slowly and quietly "O Come and mourn with me awhile" or "My God, how wonderful Thou Art" and I think that (despite Dr Temple's remarks) you will accept the fact that Faber was like the little girl who had a little curl right in the middle of her forehead - for when he was good, he was very very good, but when he was bad . . . (you know the remainder!).

My God how wonderful Thou Art,
Thy majesty how bright,
How beautiful Thy mercy seat
In depths of burning light.

This is a hymn of wonder - wonder at the majesty of Almighty God - an eloquent verse in noble language.

In the bustle and whirl of modern life we have largely lost the art of contemplation and you may recall the quotation of the uselessness of a life in which there is no time to stand and stare. Nevertheless one must have something of worth at which to stare, for as C.S. Lewis says, "there is little to be gained by staring at a dead fire alone in the small hours." God has given us a dimension in which we can look at Him, a language in which we might speak to Him and hear Him speaking to us and that dimension and language is "wonder".

A proud man or a servile man cannot wonder. To wonder he must not be anxious or proud or commanding. He must have no fear and realise that the object of his wonder is greater than himself and that it wishes him no harm at all.

How beautiful, how beautiful
The sight of Thee must be.
Thine endless wisdom, boundless power,
And awful purity.

Yet I may love Thee too, O Lord,
Almighty as Thou art,
For Thou hast stooped to ask of me
The love of my poor heart.

In the midst of this contemplation of the wonder and majesty of God, Faber brings each one of us into direct contact with Him in the tenderly worded confession of verse 6:

No earthly father loves like Thee,
No mother half so mild
Bears and forbears as Thou hast done
With me, Thy sinful child.

It has often been thought that this is a hymn of resignation, and its original last verse has been widely quoted as a fair example of Christian flabbiness and sloth. Our Hymn Book revisers omitted it entirely (surely a great mistake?), but here it is:

Father of Jesus, love's reward!
What rapture will it be,
Prostrate before Thy throne to lie,
And gaze and gaze on Thee.

This is as humble, brave and true a hymn as was ever put on paper. What kind of a Gospel would make out the sight of God to be a negligible or casual thing? Does not every honest Christian want to be near and to remain near God? The very thought of such an experience braces and humbles the mind. The sight of God, converse with Him, who knowest the secrets of our hearts, the thoughts of our minds, - God the maker of all things, the judge of all men. Rapture indeed, but a sobering thought.

Billy Adair

MUSIC LIST October 2021

Sunday 3rd October

11.00am Choral Eucharist

Setting	Merbeck	
Psalm	26	
Offertory Hymn	Lord of all hopefulness	239
Communion Hymn	Sweet sacrament	307
Anthem	The Call - RVW	
Recessional Hymn	Love divine all loves excelling	408

Trinity 18

Parish Choir

Sunday 10th October

11.00am Choral Eucharist

Setting	Sumsion in F	
Psalm	22: 1-15	
Offertory Hymn	Rejoice the Lord is King	443
Communion Hymn	Blessed Jesu	275
Anthem	For the beauty of the earth - Rutter	
Recessional Hymn	All creatures of our God	263

Trinity 19

Parish Choir

Sunday 17th October

11.00am Choral Eucharist

Setting	Ireland in C	
Psalm	104: 1-10, 26, 37c	
Offertory Hymn	Guide me O thou great	368
Communion Hymn	Once only once	304
Anthem	Listen sweet dove - Ives	
Recessional Hymn	Forth in the peace	361

Trinity 20

Parish Choir

Sunday 24th October

11.00am Eucharist

Trinity 21
Parish Choir Holiday

Sunday 31st October

11.00am Choral Eucharist

Setting	Mathias in G	
Psalm	24	
Offertory Hymn	For all the saints	197
Communion Hymn	Once only once	304
Motet	Adoramus Te, Christe - Byrd	
Recessional Hymn	Ye watchers and ye holy ones	478

All Saints

Men's Voices

A BRIEF HISTORY OF PERSIA - ITS FAITH AND CULTURE (PART 2)

In the 1990s, Russian archaeologists at Gonur Tepe, a Bronze Age site in Turkmenistan, discovered the remains of what they believed to be an early Zoroastrian fire temple. The temple dates to the second millennium BC making it the earliest known site associated with Zoroastrianism within the boundaries of the ancient Persian Empire. Its followers worshipped a single god called Ahura Mazda, and it shaped the life and thought of three Persian dynasties. As we discovered last month, Cyrus the Great, founder of the Achaemenid Persian Empire, was a devout Zoroastrian. By most accounts, he was an enlightened and tolerant ruler who allowed his non-Iranian subjects to practice their own religions. He ruled by the Zoroastrian law of *asha* (truth and righteousness) but didn't impose Zoroastrianism on the people of Persia's conquered territories. The beliefs of Zoroastrianism were spread across Asia via the Silk Road, a network of trading routes that spread from China to the Middle East and on into Europe. Some scholars say that tenets of Zoroastrianism helped to shape the major Abrahamic religions including Judaism, Christianity and Islam, through the influence of the Persian Empire. Zoroastrian concepts, including the idea of a single god, heaven, hell and a day of judgment may have been first introduced to the Jewish community of Babylonia, where people from the Kingdom of Judea had been living in captivity for decades. In 597 BC Nebuchadnezzar II, King of Assyria had seized the Kingdom of Judea and had carried off into slavery in Babylon the Judean aristocracy, army officers, and those with leadership qualities and other skills. (See Jeremiah Ch .52; Ezra; Nehemiah.) Cyrus liberated the Babylonian Jews when he conquered his rival neighbour in 539 BC. Many of the liberated Jews of Babylon returned to their home in Jerusalem where their descendants helped to put together the Hebrew Bible. Over the next millennium, Zoroastrianism would dominate two subsequent Persian dynasties - the Parthian and Sassanian Empires - until the Muslim conquest of Persia in the seventh century AD Zoroastrianism is one the world's most ancient monotheistic religions. Although a minority religion today it is estimated that there are between 100,000 and 200,000 adherents around the world, mainly in India and Iran. Parsi is the name by which the followers of Zoroastrianism are known in India, and according to Parsi tradition a group of Iranian Zoroastrians emigrated from Persia to escape religious persecution by the Muslim majority and landed on the coast of India in the state of Gujarat somewhere between AD. 785 and AD 936. Today there are

about 60,000 Parsi still in India and 1,400 in Pakistan. Like most world faiths Zoroastrianism has its symbols. The Faravahar is an ancient symbol of the Zoroastrian faith, and it depicts a bearded man with one hand reaching forward. He stands above a pair of wings that are outstretched from a circle representing eternity. Fire is another important symbol of Zoroastrianism, as it represents light, warmth and has purifying powers. Along with water it is also seen as a symbol of purity. Some Zoroastrians also recognize the evergreen cypress tree as a symbol of eternal life. Zoroastrian places of worship are sometimes called fire temples. Each fire temple contains an altar with an eternal flame that burns continuously and is never extinguished. According to legend, three ancient Zoroastrian fire temples, known as the great fires, were said to have come directly from the Zoroastrian god, Ahura Mazda, at the beginning of time. Archaeologists have searched for these places, though it's unclear whether the great fires ever existed or were purely mythical. Zoroastrians gave their dead "sky burials." They built circular, flat-topped towers called dakhmas, or towers of silence. There, corpses were exposed to the elements - and local vultures - until the bones were picked clean and bleached. Then they were collected and placed in lime pits called ossuaries. Dakhmas have been illegal in Iran since the 1970s. Many Zoroastrians today bury their dead beneath concrete slabs, though some Parsi in India still practice sky burials. A dakhma remains in operation near Mumbai (Bombay) India, for example. The ancient Persians of the Achaemenid Empire created art in many forms including metalwork, rock carvings, weaving and architecture. As the Persian Empire expanded to encompass other artistic centres of early civilisation, so Persian art began to include large carved rock reliefs and a new style was formed from these sources. The continued influence which the Achaemenid Persian Empire exerted upon its conquered territories, as well as the wider ancient world can be seen in the Old Testament story of Queen Esther set during the reign of Xerxes I, (485-465 BC.) or Ahasuerus as he is called in the book of Esther. It is a story of a Jewish girl who became a queen to a Persian king. The Persian Empire entered a period of decline after a failed invasion of Greece by Xerxes I in 480 BC. The costly defence of Persia's territories depleted the Empire's finances leading to heavier taxation for the Empire's subjects, and the Achaemenid Dynasty finally fell when in AD. 330 Alexander the Great invaded Persia.

Fr. Graeme Pollock and Meisam Khalili

“DAVID’S PEBBLES STOPPED GOLIATH - SMALL STEPS TO CHANGE THE WORLD”

GEOFF NEWELL

On 7th September, the Select Vestry formally decided to join Eco-Congregation Ireland. The application was duly made and, along with many other churches of all denominations across Ireland, St George’s is now a member. The Church of Ireland representative on Eco-Congregation Ireland and its current chair is the Rev. Andrew Orr. He is an Honorary Canon, St Fin Barre’s Cathedral, Cork, with responsibility for environmental issues and climate change. Ecocongregation seeks to enlist parishes collectively and Christians individually and as households in the campaign against Climate Change and the other aspects of today’s society which are so damaging to our planet both now and in the longer term.

In last month’s parish magazine we looked at some of the steps we have already taken as a parish to reduce our negative impact on our planet home. This month I’d like to look at the difference we might make as individuals and as families. In particular I’d like to explore the issue of what we eat.

The Feminist philosophy of “the personal is political” is very appropriate in this context- whatever we decide to include or exclude from our shopping bag, can be viewed as a small political act expressing our values and in part defining who we are.

You may not have heard of the LOAF Principles. But they are a good way to decide upon the ethics of any item:

Local: supporting local businesses, especially small businesses which means less fuel is used to transport the things we buy.

Organic: no or fewer chemicals used, so less impact on insects and wildflowers.

Animal-friendly: consider eating fewer animal products overall, or consider the conditions that any animals you do eat, are kept in. Have at least one “animal-free” day a week, and don’t just substitute dairy for meat, consider vegan alternatives- there are lots of recipes available.

Fair-Trade: consider the ethics of how and where things are made, and the conditions of the workers involved in production.

One scheme which ticks all of these boxes, is Jubilee Farm near Larne. This is a small local farming cooperative. They describe themselves as a Christian creation care organisation, defining this as “environmental and agricultural stewardship, that incorporates fairness and flourishing, wellness and wellbeing”.

They grow vegetables and rear pigs organically, and operate a weekly or bi-weekly veg-box scheme, as well as a “pig club”, which people

can sign up to. They also have asylum seekers working on the farm, providing important employability skills.

St George's made a modest contribution to getting Jubilee Farm up and running and we are members of the coop which runs it. We are planning a visit at some point- anyone with an interest in this can contact Eleanor at eleanor@thebostons.eu

To find out more about Jubilee Farm, visit:

<https://www.jubilee.coop/>

To find out more about LOAF Principles, check out the Green Christian website, which includes some recipes:

<https://greenchristian.org.uk/gc-campaigns/loaf/>

About Eco–Congregation Ireland

Eco–Congregation Ireland is an initiative of the Irish Inter Church Meeting, and includes members from the Roman Catholic Church, Church of Ireland, Presbyterian Church, Methodist Church and Religious Society of Friends.

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Endpiece by Jo Calder

“This is Planet Earth”

“Only came outside to watch the nightfall with the rain”.....Look now, look all around, there's no sign of life.....Look now, look all aroundthere's no sign of life.....Is there anybody out there trying to get through?....This is planet earth, you're looking at planet earth.” These are lyrics taken from a song by the band Duran Duran; it was their first ever single in 1981. 40 years later I think these lyrics are even more pertinent.

It was great to read Fr Brian's concerns in the September issue of the Parish magazine, I was really delighted to learn St George's has set up a group dealing with environmental issues, and just as pleased to know what has already been done in the Church to help reduce some of the problems which impact on the environment.

Most are aware Prince Charles has been an environmental advocate for many years – far longer than many others who decided to take an interest in what is happening to our Planet. He may not be popular with some, but I think we should all acknowledge his commitment. Long before others acknowledged what was happening to the Planet, he was trying to make people more aware of the ensuing problems. Many thought he was just eccentric, or the situation was being exaggerated; sadly, we now realise this is not the case.

There is still a lot of waste going on in many areas – leaving lights on when the room is not being used, for example, and in daily life we sometimes don't even realise we are doing it! Apparently the Queen is known to go around Buckingham Palace switching off lights in empty rooms! It's a pity the big stores and supermarkets don't follow her example, instead of leaving premises lit up overnight. I read an article recently by John Humphrys, the journalist, where he recalled a chat with an old lady living in a Care Home, who repeatedly asked assistants to give her less food to which they replied, *“just eat what you can and leave the rest”*, yet here in the UK there still are families who struggle to feed themselves on a daily basis. He also used an example of how there are people who decide to throw out old, ripped jeans only to go out and buy a new pair of ripped jeans! The fashion industry has long been a big culprit in how they conduct their businesses which has been detrimental to the environment, as well as using cheap labour in poor countries, but at least some people have realised what was happening and now re-cycle their clothes. Thankfully, too, it is not just clothes being recycled, and many are getting all sorts of items repaired rather than throwing them out if they break down.

We've heard about the organisation Extinction Rebellion – certainly, they are very worried about environmental issues and do have legitimate concerns about a lot of these, but I'm not sure how they go about their demonstrations is winning people over to their cause. Now there is another environmental group making the headlines called Insulate Britain, who caused havoc very recently in England – including the closure of the M25 and blocked the road near Stansted airport. Causing such disruption will not convince those who have been inconvenienced. Certainly, their arguments are valid, but surely

there must be a better and more effective way of emphasising there are big problems with the environment. It will be very interesting to see what happens in November at the COP26 conference in Glasgow. We know about the scepticism some world leaders still have about climate change and global warming, despite the obvious signs all around the world. As I write this, apparently China has not confirmed its attendance, something I think is worrying, given China is deemed the largest polluter in the world. I do know it has a huge population, but I think that was taken into account before the statement was made.

As some parishioners know, I have mentioned my concerns before when boring those who may have read my previous articles! I make no secret of my love of animals and my anger as to what is happening around the world when their habitats are taken away from them, whether it is for additional housing, farming or industry. Again I accept people do need homes, that agriculture plays a big part in providing jobs and food, (more sustainable farming is needed) and industry produces many of the items we use every day. However, I would like to see where these can “live” alongside animals, not destroy their lives.

I recently watched two wonderful programmes on BBC2. One focused on those iconic, amazing mammals in Australia, the Koala Bear and the Kangaroo. For me it was just spell-binding to watch these creatures, but I was also annoyed to hear what is happening to their living areas. The Koala is already endangered due to the dreadful bush fires (caused of course by what is happening to the Planet), but now the trees where they live and the leaves of these trees which they eat are being chopped down. It also showed the Kangaroos going down to a beach, and the presenters were baffled as this is not their usual hang-out! A couple of the wildlife conservationists decided to quietly follow them one night, without disturbing them, and it became obvious why the Kangaroos were making this dangerous journey. It was to forage in the sand to find something to eat – their habitat was being taken away for the building of more houses.

The other programme was about Giraffes. We know these are amazing creatures with unbelievably long necks, but I’m definitely no expert on them. The programme focused on a husband and wife, wildlife conservationists, who set themselves a target of taking 20 of these rarest of fabulous animals across the river Nile to another part of Africa in an effort to save that particular species. I learned something new from this programme – it appears there are several types of Giraffe. Again, it is us humans who are endangering these Giraffes by destroying their environment, as well as vile poachers murdering them. Sadly, this monstrous industry in selling animal parts is causing as much destruction of many endangered species as the damage we are doing to their habitats.

These are only three examples of how creatures are becoming endangered, or indeed could become extinct. I hope and pray as we come to admit the damage being done to the Planet, it will also have a positive impact on the amazing creatures who share it with us.

