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Please put a note in the 'reference' box for online banking so treasurers know what the payment is for and/or from whom, if that is important. Thank you.

April 24th, 2024

NOTICES FOR THIS WEEK

April 28th, 2024

**9am Holy Communion at St Nicholas
10.30am Family Service with Baptisms**

Dear friends of St Clement and St Nicholas,

A long letter this week ! On Monday I attended a briefing for clergy by the civil servants tasked with preparing the ground for the legislation debate on assisted dying, which will take place on May 21st/22nd.

There will be several opportunities to learn about the proposals, so do make the effort to attend or read up as it is arguably the most important piece of legislation in many years and one which could fundamentally change the attitude of our island community to old age, the elderly, pain and fears that once the gate is open it could cover mental illness and disability.

Not a subject for a family service with baptism so some thoughts here and no apologies that I struggle to offer an entirely balanced assessment.

It is a topic which provokes a huge range of views. The very small team of civil servants tasked with researching this issue for the States did an exceptional job and reported back to us their findings from countries and professionals from around the world.

Politicians base the need on the conclusion of a 'citizens' jury' Depending on your views it was either a fair process or biased. Imagine a trial where you selected jurors to represent the proportion of people in community that thought someone was guilty or not guilty before the trial had started . What outcome would you expect ?

Politicians use their conclusion to justify moving forward.

There are two strands - the first which has become available recently in a number of 'western' style countries is to allow assisted dying for people with a terminal illness. Research shows that people can want this as a safety net, for example worrying that end of life pain relief might not be sufficient. Some then go on to have a natural death. Either way the debate has highlighted the need for increased funding for the type of specialist care offered for example by Jersey Hospice .

There will then be a vote on 'Route 2' which is far more controversial and harder to define, which is assisted dying for those who have 'unbearable suffering'. Politicians are being optimistic, at best, if they

claim it will not lead to pressure for slippage over time into covering not just physical pain but mental health and the age of eligibility could lower.

The gatekeepers will be doctors assisted by other professionals , for example a social worker if there are fears a family might be putting pressure to shorten someone's time in an expensive nursing home. It is impossible though to quantify the effect of potentially years of conditioning. It is not a topic to be flippant about but is it beyond imagining that families create an expectation over ten or more years that it is not really loving, when you get old, if you linger too long in a nursing home as the grandchildren are struggling to put down deposits on first homes ? Route 2 is a step beyond what several countries have done and the freedom of choice lobby seems to miss the point that it will fundamentally change our attitude to old age and illness. One Dutchman - where practically anything is allowed - left Holland because almost every doctor he went to offered death as a solution to his problems. ' unbearable suffering' is a tremendously difficult condition to quantify or judge .

Even if the first option is chosen there is a strong argument that Jersey should slow down and wait for countries with vastly greater resources to explore the complexities of Route 2 . The liberal agenda of some politicians for free choice sounds attractive but can ignore or fail to acknowledge or research the long term implications. Once the lid of assisted dying is lifted it will be impossible to close and is likely to just open wider. As a popular phrase says 'take a beat' , pause , let far larger jurisdictions explore and learn from their experience.

The biggest task of politicians is to protect the vulnerable. Anyone attending safeguarding courses when asked who is vulnerable soon works out that however confident and empowered we feel now, none of the above fears could ever happen to me , all of us could become vulnerable if our circumstances change and that vulnerability is at the root of the arguments both for and against. We will have a range of views and may not agree on some of the issues but do become informed and pray for wisdom and understanding for our States.

Best wishes
David

**Welcome to St Clements Parish Church
Family Service with Baptisms
April 28th, 2024**

A&M 6

**Lord, as the day begins
Lift up our hearts in praise;
Take from us all our sins,
Guard us in all our ways:
Our every step direct and guide
That Christ in all be glorified!**

**Christ be in work and skill
Serving each other's need;
Christ be in thought and will
Christ be in word and deed:
Our minds be set on things above
In joy and peace, in faith and love.**

**Grant us the Spirit's strength,
Teach us to walk his way
So bring us all at length
Safe to the close of day:
From hour to hour sustain and bless
And let our song be thankfulness.**

**Now as the day begins
Make it the best of days
Take from us all our sins
Guard us in all our ways
Our every step direct and guide
That Christ in all be glorified.**

All: Almighty God, our heavenly Father, we have sinned against you and against our neighbour in thought and word and deed, through negligence, through weakness, through our own deliberate fault. We are truly sorry and repent of all our sins.

For the sake of your Son Jesus Christ, who died for us, forgive us all that is past and grant that we may serve you in newness of life to the glory of your name. Amen.

Almighty God, who forgives all who truly repent, have mercy upon you, pardon and deliver you from all your sins, confirm and strengthen you in all goodness, and keep you in life eternal; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **All: Amen.**

Profession of Faith by all the congregation.

Do you believe and trust in God the Father?

All; I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.

Do you believe and trust in his Son Jesus Christ?

All: I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died and was buried; he descended to the dead. On the third day he rose again; he ascended into heaven, he is seated at the right hand of the Father, and he will come to judge the living and the dead.

Do you believe and trust in the Holy Spirit?

All: I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Holy Catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body and the life everlasting. Amen

CA 88

**Brother, sister, let me serve you,
Let me be as Christ to you;
Pray that I may have the grace to
Let you be my servant too.**

**We are pilgrims on a journey
Fellow trav'lers on the road;
We are here to help each other
Walk the mile and bear the load.**

**I will hold the Christlight for you
In the night-time of your fear;
I will hold my hand out to you,
Speak the peace you long to hear.**

**I will weep when you are weeping;
When you laugh, I'll laugh with you.
I will share your joy and sorrow
Till we've seen this journey through.**

**When we sing to God in heaven,
We shall find such harmony,
Born of all we've known together
Of Christ's love and agony.**

**Brother, sister, let me serve you,
Let me be as Christ to you;
Pray that I may have the grace to
Let you be my servant, too.**

The Gospel Reading: Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to John (John 15 1-8)
Glory to you, O Lord.

"I am the true vine, and my Father is the gardener. He cuts off every branch in me that bears no fruit, while every branch that does bear fruit he prunes so that it will be even more fruitful. You are already clean because of the word I have spoken to you. Remain in me, as I also remain in you. No branch can bear fruit by itself; it must remain in the vine. Neither can you bear fruit unless you remain in me. "I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing. If you do not remain in me, you are like a branch that is thrown away and withers; such branches are picked up, thrown into the fire and burned. If you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. This is to my Father's glory, that you bear much fruit, showing yourselves to be my disciples.

This is the Gospel of the Lord **Praise to you, O Christ.**

The Sermon: David Jesus used everyday items to illustrate his points . Coins, sheep, jars and barns. Water, wine, fish and bread. Vines would have been as common for them as Jersey Royals are here. Hidden beneath the earth the seed potato gives nutrients to the growing shoots and tiny potatoes smaller than a pea begin to appear joined onto the network of roots and shoots. If you pick them too early you get less potato back than you put in, delay too long and if you are picking as you eat you find they grow rather larger than merits the term 'new'.

For the time of the growing season the tiny potatoes will carry on increasing in size as long as you don't separate them from the parent plant. This isn't too far removed from the picture of the vine , cut the vine and everything beyond will stop growing and die. It has life because it is joined to the central vine. We are therefore called to be connected to Jesus and not cut ourselves off from the rest of the vine. Too often children who are baptized are like Jersey Royals , an excellent start but removed from the plant when they are tiny - great for taste if you are a potato but as a human being removed from Christ the vine we stay small spiritually and fail to grow into the adult Christian.

Parents and godparents come to the font.

Our Lord Jesus Christ has told us that to enter the kingdom of heaven we must be born again of water and the Spirit; and has given us baptism as the sign and seal of this new birth.

Faith is the gift of God to his people. In baptism the Lord is adding to our number those whom he is calling.

People of God, will you welcome these children and uphold them in their new life in Christ?

All: With the help of God we will.

Parents and godparents the church receives these children with joy. Today we are trusting God for their growth in faith.

Will you pray for them and walk with them in the way of Christ and draw them by your example into the life and worship of Christ's Church. **All: With the help of God, we will.**

In baptism, God calls us out of darkness into his marvellous light. To follow Christ means dying to sin and rising to new life with him.

Therefore, I ask you the parents and godparents:

Do you turn to Christ? **I turn to Christ**

Do you repent of your sins? **I repent of my Sins**

Do you renounce evil? **I renounce evil.**

Prayer over the Water: Heavenly Father now sanctify this water that by the power of your Holy Spirit they may be cleansed from Sin and born again.

Renewed in your image, may they walk by the light of faith and continue for ever in the risen life of Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen**

Baptism I baptise you the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

Signing with the cross: Christ claims you for his own. Receive the sign of the cross.

After the Baptism Do not be ashamed to confess the faith of Christ crucified.

Fight valiantly as a disciple of Christ against sin, the world and the devil and remain faithful to Christ to the end of your life.

May almighty God deliver you from the powers of darkness, restore in you the image of his glory and lead you in the light and obedience of Christ. **Amen**

A Candle is presented. God has delivered us from the dominion of darkness and has given us a place with the saints in light. You have received the light of Christ; walk in this light all the days of your life.

All: Shine as a light in the world to the glory of God the Father.

The Welcome and Bibles There is one Lord, one faith, one baptism by one Spirit we are all baptised into one body, .**All: We welcome you into the fellowship of faith. We are children of the same heavenly Father; we welcome you.**

CA 332

**I, the Lord of sea and sky,
I have heard my people cry.
All who dwell in dark and sin
my hand will save.
I who made the stars of night,
I will make their darkness bright.
Who will bear my light to them?
Whom shall I send?**

***Here I am, Lord. Is it I Lord?
I have heard you calling in the night.
I will go, Lord, if you lead me.
I will hold your people in my heart.***

**I, the Lord of snow and rain,
I have borne my people's pain.
I have wept for love of them.
They turn away.
I will break their hearts of stone.
give them hearts for love alone.
I will speak my word to them.
Whom shall I send? (Refrain)**

I, the Lord of wind and flame,
I will tend the poor and lame.
I will set a feast for them.
My hand will save.
Finest bread I will provide
till their hearts be satisfied.
I will give my life to them.
Whom shall I send?

(Refrain)

The Collect for the fifth Sunday of Easter: Almighty God, who through your only-begotten Son Jesus Christ have overcome death and opened to us the gate of everlasting life: grant that, as by your grace going before us you put into our minds good desires, so by your continual help we may bring them to good effect; through Jesus Christ our risen Lord, who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen**

Prayers ending: Lord in your mercy **All: Hear our prayer.**

Jesus, you are the vine and we your branches. Help us to stay connected to you.

May your love expand the hearts and minds of all in authority to pursue truth and justice. Strengthen peacemakers everywhere – may they see the fruit of their work.

Pray for the Middle East and all living in fear of their lives. Pray for the people of Ukraine.

Open the hearts of all people to reflect love in ways that nurture and inspire growth.

Pray that we learn how best to encourage others ... remember teachers and all who are preparing to take exams at this time.

Be with the sick, the lonely, the frightened. May your love flow like a healing river into their lives.

Pray for those you know who are going through a tough time.

Be with the dying and those who watch and wait at their bedside. Be with the grieving, for all who have lost a loved one. May you abide with them always.

Pray for those you know coming to the end of their lives and those who need the comfort of knowing they are loved and cared for in their grief.

Merciful Father, **accept these prayers for the sake of your Son, our Saviour Jesus Christ. Amen.**

The Lord's Prayer

All: Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name, thy Kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the Kingdom, the power and the glory for ever and ever. Amen

CA 103

**Christ the Lord is ris'n again,
Christ hath broken ev'ry chain.
Hark, angelic voices cry,
Singing evermore on high.
*Alleluia.***

**He who gave for us his life,
Who for us endured the strife,
Is our paschal Lamb today;
We too sing for joy, and say:
*Alleluia***

He who bore all pain and loss
Comfortless upon the cross,
Lives in glory now on high,
Pleads for us, and hears our cry:
Alleluia.

He who slumbered in the grave
Is exalted now to save:
Now through Christendom it rings
That the Lamb is King of kings.
Alleluia

Now he bids us tell abroad
How the lost may be restored
How the penitent forgiv'n
How we too may enter heav'n.
Alleluia

Thou, our paschal Lamb indeed,
Christ, thy ransomed people feed;
Take our sins and guilt away
Let us sing by night and day:
Alleluia

The Grace

May the Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ and the Love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, be with us all evermore. Amen

KENYAN BLESSING

All our problems
We send to the cross of Christ

All our difficulties
We send to the cross of Christ

All the devils works
We send to the cross of Christ

All our hopes
We set on the risen Christ

The Blessing. And the blessing of God almighty, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit be upon you and remain with you always. **Amen**