

While our Rector David Tomlinson is on his sabbatical from May to the end of July 2019, Rachel Prior will write a Curate's Letter.

Curate's Letter – Aug-Sept 2019

Dear Friends,

I never knew my grandmother. My Dad's mum Beryl died long before I was born.

The other day, my Dad found a letter from Beryl to her sister Kay. Beryl had told a lady named Mrs Jackson of her worries, and wanted to share with her sister the advice that she had received:



*Why are ye so fearful? How is it that ye have no faith? (Mark 4.40)
Go in all simplicity; do not be so anxious to win a quiet mind, and it will be all the quieter. Do not examine so closely the progress of your soul. Do not crave so much to be perfect; but let your spiritual life be formed by your duties, and by the action which are called forth by circumstances. Do not take over thought for tomorrow God who has led you safely on so far will lead you on to the end. Be altogether at rest in the loving confidence which you ought to have in this heavenly Providence – Francis De Sales*

Receiving this letter at a time when I too felt worried struck me: is there an end to worry? I wonder what my Nan was worried about those sixty years ago. I wonder what her sister Kay was worried about, that led my Nan to write this letter hopeful that Kay might be comforted by the 'beautiful simplicity' of De Sales' reflections on the gospel.

Fear seems to take up any space we might give it, and breed and grow so that it suffuses all. One worry grows into another...and another...and another. And it grows beyond us impacting our relationships, even isolating us from one another. Dietrich Bonhoeffer, in a sermon preached on January 15th 1933, wrote 'Fear secretly gnaws and eats away at all the ties that bind a person to God and to others.' Our challenge is to turn to God, trusting in the one who is Truth and Peace rather than the fear that distorts.

The gospels tell the story of the disciples stuck in the middle of a storm. Fear is breathing down their necks, and all they can see is their worst nightmare, their fear of death. They run to the sleeping Jesus and jostle him awake, 'Teacher don't you care if we drown?' He calms the wind and the waves and then asks them a question, "Why are you so afraid? Do you still have no faith?"

As Jesus speaks peace to the waves and the wind, so he speaks peace to us too when our minds are stormy: Peace, be still! He invites us to have faith, for when we are in the midst of

losing our security, so then we are free to receive God and be kept totally safe in God.

Whatever storms we are facing, may we take heart and turn to the one who has overcome the world (John 16.33). Do not take over thought for tomorrow God who has led you safely on so far will lead you on to the end.

With love,

Rachel

Previous copies of Rector's Letter

[July 2019](#)

[June 2019](#)

[May 2019](#)

[April 2019](#)

[March 2019](#)

[February 2019](#)

[Dec 2018/Jan 2019](#)

[November 2018](#)

[October 2018](#)