

Christ Church Freemantle

Sunday 13th December – Third Sunday of Advent

Faith and Consumerism

I have recently been reading a book called 'Just Living: Faith and Community in an Age of Consumerism' by Ruth Valerio. As the title suggests, it is an exploration of how Christians can lead a life in an age where being a consumer is not a neutral activity. Virtually everything we do has an input on everyone, everywhere and also impacts on the whole web of life on earth.

My concern about man-made changes to the planet's climate and a global impact on everything that lives, goes back over fifty years when I worked for the Meteorology office. The science even then was well known – the more greenhouse gases we put into the atmosphere, the higher the temperatures would rise and that the more pollutants released by man-made activities, the more all living things would be damaged or destroyed. Valerio's thesis is that it is essential that we all learn to consume less, and that we withdraw from activities that produce pollutants wherever possible.

As Christians, she would agree that we have a spiritual duty to exercise good stewardship on earth. Her position is that we need to 'reduce, re-use, repair and recycle'. If we all combine to act then we can construct a world in which mankind is part of a sustainable approach to living lightly on the planet. She would see this as an outcome of having been given dominion over the earth by God.



Not that this is an easy path, but then as followers of Jesus, we know that nothing is impossible if we follow in the steps of the Lord.

To end on a positive note, we have all learnt to reduce/avoid using plastic bags. Small individual steps can have big collective results.

Stephen Scott

