

Christ Church Freemantle

Mothering Sunday 22nd March 2020

Thought for the Week – What do we really need to worship?

Some years ago I led a party from Botley to our link Diocese in Calabar, South-west Nigeria. We worshipped in huge congregations, but missed having Communion for various reasons. So the four in our group decided to celebrate together, in the little lodge where we stayed each night in the Bishop's garden.

It was a moving experience. We had to improvise. We used orange juice in a china cup, and bright yellow corn bread. I had my prayer book and we sat on plastic chairs around a table in candlelight. We remembered our families, and prayed for those villages we'd been visiting and the churches we'd be going to the next day. The sense of God's presence with us was vivid, it was a very special moment we shall never forget.

Worshipping together is part of our nature as Christians, which is why the coming weeks will be hard for us all. We take for granted Christ Church, the building we've come to love, the ritual of the Eucharist, the music, the fellowship of each other. Yes, God is with us in all these things, yet he is more than any of them. Wherever we are, HE IS. Whenever we stop, and give space, and open ourselves up, we can know his presence.

So can I suggest a simple way to worship whilst we are confined to home.

Take a moment in the early morning to think of your family, friends, neighbours, the church family, and all those in need - and hand them over into God's care each day. Then at the end of the day, keep a quiet moment to thank God for anything which has been good in your day – however small, and use the Evening Collect printed below. Knowing that others are doing what you are doing helps keep the fellowship, and you will know that others are praying for you, and that we are continuing a pattern or prayer which has existed throughout Christian history.

May the Lord bless each one of us, keep us well, and close to him through this dark time.

Ian Coomber

*Lighten our darkness, we beseech thee, O Lord;
and by thy great mercy defend us from all perils and dangers of this night;
for the love of thy only Son, our Saviour, Jesus Christ. Amen.*