

Creation tide 2 St Thomas's 12.09.21

I'm not sure exactly what age I was maybe 7 or 8 but I had a horrid habit of saying to my parents "I don't care"

As a result they would look me in the eye and say: "Don't care was made to care. Don't care was hung. Don't care was put in a pot and boiled till he was done."

A pretty little rhyme don't you think.

Of course we should care! And this season of Creation tide, which goes from Sept 1st right through until the Feast Day of St Francis on October 4th is being observed not only by Anglicans but by the Roman Catholic Church the Orthodox Churches and many others. And it is especially appropriate as our planet, Mother Earth is clearly in the midst of an environmental and climate crisis.

But why should we Christians have a particular care for creation? Why should we have the care of the creation in our DNA? Why not leave it to the Green Party or as some have suggested to long haired sandal wearing lefties?

Well here are four copper bottomed reasons.

First. We believe that God made the world and that he loves it. God thinks that it is very good. And because God loves the world then we should also love what he loves and take care of it for his sake.

Second. God created us to look after his creation. We have been given a special task to look after what God has made.

This is not an optional extra for a few keen environmentalists but a fundamental part of what it means to be human.

Third. The sad truth is that many problems in our world and its inhabitants are caused by human activity. Things have gone wrong because of us. We bear the guilt for the state our world is in so we have responsibility to act.

Fourth. God has a purpose for his world. His purpose is that all of his creation will be radically renewed. That is why God came into the world in the person of Jesus. And so we as Christians and as members of his Church have an important part to play in God's work of restoration and renewal.

Short recap

Today's Gospel - part of the Sermon on the Mount from Matthew's Gospel tells us again and again not to be anxious.

Jesus says Do not anxious about your life, what you eat or drink or what you wear. He knows we need these things and indeed he wants us to enjoy these things, he wants us to live happy and fulfilled lives.

Sister Sheila one of the Franciscan Nuns from Ladywell at Godalming would often say that after our death at the Pearly Gates we will be asked "Well did you enjoy the life I gave you - did you enjoy it?"

I like to think that most of us living in this very beautiful and prosperous part of the world are enjoying life. Most of us have a roof over our head, food in the cupboard, possibly some money in the bank or somewhere. We have good schools, hospitals, a lovely town a lovely parish we even a Waitrose!

What more could we possibly want?
That's serious question.

Do we want more than what the world can offer us and which most of us here are able to enjoy?

Jesus says all these things or most of them are good and he wants us to enjoy them and they are there for us to enjoy but it's a case of prioritising.

Jesus tells us that first we are to seek God's kingdom and his righteousness.

If we are to take this seriously - seeking God's Kingdom – Then, every time we say the Lord's Prayer, we pray 'Your kingdom come on earth as it already is in heaven', we will want the kingship of God not only to become real in the hearts and lives of individuals, but also we will want to do all we can to care for, value, and restore our beautiful home, this planet, which God has put here for us to enjoy together with the rest of the human race.

Clearly however much we enjoy our walks in the Bourne Woods or Frensham Ponds, however much we have enjoyed these last few days of summer, things have clearly gone seriously wrong: sea rises, forest fires, storms, natural habitats destroyed, a huge decline in flora and fauna, huge decline in the number of mammals and birds, the pollution of cities our seas and our oceans.

The good news is that quite a lot is being done by people here this morning. They are honouring God as Creator and being alongside others in both valuing God's world and renewing it. Which is exactly what Jesus did in sharing his life with us and reconciling the world to God restoring humanity and creation.

Here are some examples which you might be involved with.

The Friday Fridge project. Working with supermarkets and others to eliminate food waste and being alongside our neighbours who are finding life tough.

Valuing and cherishing the beautiful trees and plants in the church grounds and supporting the conservation project in the old churchyard

Deciding to eat less meat which is good for our health, and is helping to prevent deforestation.

Supporting Fair Trade, which is providing a living wage for those who are in danger of being exploited

Recycling our waste and plastic which I imagine we all do.

Joining an environmental group such as litter picking or caring for Farnham Park

All these are ways that we can celebrate, cherish and play our part in restoring God's creation and loving our neighbour.

These are down to earth ways that we can obey the two great Commandments that Jesus gave us

Love God, love His creation, Love our neighbour

We all have our part to play

World leaders are meeting in November. We must hope and pray that they will do everything possible to put achievable targets in place to preserve our planet for future generations. They need our encouragement and support., with everyone doing their bit to put policies in place

Individuals like Greta Thunberg and David Attenborough are fantastic in reminding us how wonderful and precious the world is how vital it is that we respond to the crises.

The local community has a part to play by encouraging public transport, providing affordable housing, protecting the environment.

Our parish seeing - how we can become a gold star eco parish.

Playing our part as individuals

So, as well as playing our part - whatever that may be let us be thankful people for this beautiful world; let us be thankful that we have the opportunity to play our part in its healing; let us be thankful that we have the potential to respond creatively in caring for God's beautiful world and all who share it.

And why should we care ?

Because God made the world

God has entrusted us to look after his creation

We have to accept responsibility for the mess we are in

God came alongside us in the person of Jesus to restore his creation and humanity so let us play our part whatever that may be in sharing in his task.

Andrew Tuck 12. 09. 21