

End the Week with CME - May 1, 2009

1st May 2009

Welcome to End the Week with CME! This weekly email is sent automatically to Clergy and Readers in the diocese (if you don't want to receive it, please send an email to CovEW-unsubscribe@lists.covlec.org) but anyone is welcome to subscribe to the list, and we are especially keen to pass it on to any interested lay people, especially those who may have responsibility for preaching. To subscribe they simply need to email CovEW-subscribe@lists.covlec.org.

End the Week will be taking a fortnight's break and will be back on May 22.

Diocesan CME Events Coming Up

May 18, 2009 - The Meaning of Mark

A Bible Reflection evening with Paula Gooder and Richard Cooke. Monday 18 May at Red Hill Christian Centre, 10am-3pm (limited places available) with an abbreviated repeat from 7.30-9.30pm. Cost: £15 (including tea/coffee and cakes). Grants of half the cost are available for clergy and Readers. Book through cme@covcofe.org.

June 18, 2009 - Under the Wings of Refuge - Exploring the book of Ruth

A Ministry Reflection Day with David Runcorn, Thursday 18 June at Offa House, 10am-3pm with an abbreviated repeat from 7.30-9.30pm. Cost: £30 (including lunch) for the daytime course, £12.50 (including coffee and cakes) for the evening. Grants of half the cost are available for clergy and Readers. Book through cme@covcofe.org.

September 22, 2009 - Spanish Mystics

A Spirituality Reflection Day with Ruth Tuschling, Tuesday 22 September at Offa House, 10am-3pm with an abbreviated repeat from 7.30-9.30pm. Cost: £30 (including lunch) for the daytime course, £12.50 (including coffee and cakes) for the evening. Grants of half the cost are available for clergy and Readers. Book through

Other Events Coming Up

Retreat opportunity

Due to a cancellation, Holland House <http://www.hollandhouse.org/> now has a weekend available for any groups or individuals in need of a Bank Holiday weekend break.

22 - 24 May 2009 is available for full board and accommodation at only £95 per person, or if you'd like to stay into Bank Holiday Monday (May 25th) and make it a long weekend, the rate is £120 (per person).

Give Lucy, Stephanie or Ian a call on 01386 860330 to find out more, or email enquiries@hollandhouse.org.

Reader AGM and Conference

A reminder for Readers that you can claim from your yearly CME Discretionary Grant (£120) for up to half of the cost of the conference. A grant application form can be downloaded at <http://www.coventry.anglican.org/ministry/learning/grants/>.

For details of all the events coming up, which have been advertised in recent editions of End the Week, please go to <http://www.coventry.anglican.org/ministry/learning/trainingstudy/>

Notes on the Gospel Readings for Sunday 10 May (Easter 5) John 15. 1-8

Dwelling in the Vine

I used to have vine below my bedroom window. In the summer it spread out and made a wonderful canopy, and one of my main memories of that house is lying in bed and listening to the rain pattering on the vine

leaves below. Showers rarely penetrated to the ground beneath the vine. The trunk was twisted and knotty, but amazingly resilient. It had been planted by a previous vicar, who had brought the root back from Israel. When you stood beneath the vine in summer it enveloped you, and you felt as if you were caught up in it.

Perhaps that's why Jesus spoke of the relationship between himself and his followers as being like a vine. The fruitful vine was, of course, an image used in the Old Testament of the people of Israel, not always to their credit (see Isaiah 5.1-7, for example). Yet the natural symbolism is also powerful: the vine branches cut off from the stem cannot flourish on their own, they must remain closely linked to the life that flows up from the root if they wish to bear fruit themselves. The vine-branches which are not bearing fruit no longer have the life of the vine flowing through them. They have to be pruned back in order to enable them to grow better (John 15.1), to reconnect with the life of the vine.

In other words, in the Easter season we can recognise that it is the resurrection life of Jesus that flows through and animates the disciples of Jesus. Though mission has its place in this gospel (see John 20.21), almost more important than going out is 'remaining' in Jesus (John 15.4-5). To put it another way, discipleship (learning from Jesus) takes priority over apostleship (being sent out by Jesus) in John's gospel. Of course there is an appropriate rhythm between the two (see John 10.9) but staying close to the root is essential. The emphasis is on being in relationship with Jesus, rather than doing anything.

Staying close to the root means that Jesus' followers become more like him: and so the same kind of unity which is seen between Jesus and the Father characterises the relationship between Jesus and his followers. In this way the followers of Jesus show the glory of God (John 15.8). Paul saw that same glory shown in a similar way, through the 'fruit of the Spirit' (Gal. 5.22-23), displayed in relationships of love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control.

This passage and those for the Sundays that follow come from Jesus' farewell discourse to the disciples. They form his last instructions about how to dwell within the vine, to feel enveloped in its presence and to remain in it in such a way that it is his life, not ours, which flows out and makes Jesus known to the world around.

And Finally...

A woman had just returned to her home from an evening of church services, when she was startled by an intruder. She caught the man in the act of robbing her home of its valuables and yelled: 'Stop! Acts 2:38!' (Repent and be Baptized, in the name of Jesus Christ, so that your sins may be forgiven.)

The burglar stopped in his tracks. The woman calmly called the police and explained what she had done.

As the officer cuffed the man to take him in, he asked the burglar: 'Why did you just stand there? All the old lady did was yell a scripture to you.'

'Scripture?' replied the burglar. 'She said she had an Ax and Two 38s!'

That's all, folks!

Richard

Richard Cooke

Coventry CME

Richard.Cooke@CovCofE.org