

A few words from the Vicarage ...



As we are now in the Lenten season and approaching the wonder of Easter, I am mindful of the work we each do within our Christian community. We look forward to continuing with our much loved 'worship and witness' experiences of Good Friday as we join with our brothers and sisters in the local Churches Together family.

This 'coming together' of the various Christian denominations and traditions is hugely important, not only for each of us within the church communities to which we belong, but also as a statement to those

presently who stand outside the Christian family. Indeed, that is what we are, we are a family, with one Father; not different families with different Fathers.

I know this may be difficult for others to appreciate; it is a great sadness that we have so many divisions and this must make others wonder what we are about. Through this annual public display of unity, it is hoped that we may go some way towards allaying fears and dispelling doubts by showing that we are all 'singing from the same hymn sheet'.

Our Good Friday service on Woodlands Road is clear evidence, if evidence is needed, that we can stand shoulder to shoulder with each other; and then, as we process to one of the five churches, we carry Christ's cross aloft, as a beacon of light in the dark pathway of life in modern society ~ a society which shuns the way of Jesus to such an extent that his people are being marginalized by minorities.

The recent court action against prayers being said at Council meetings is yet another of these crass attempts to demean and diminish our faith. The Government Minister without Portfolio, Baroness Warsi, herself a Muslim, said recently on a visit to the Holy See in Rome that *Europe needs to become more confident in its Christianity in the face of 'militant secularisation'*.

If we are able to show our confidence in our Christianity by worshipping together, despite our differences, then we may just help to answer that clarion call *in the face of 'militant secularisation'*.

May you all have a good Lent and a truly blessed Easter.

God bless you all,

Your Vicar,

Fr D.