

August
2013

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A Pastoral Letter.....

Dear Friends,

The sun is dazzling. The light is radiant. Everything is bathed in gold as I sit in the cool of my garden on West Watford's Riviera. In short, it is suddenly Summer as, languidly, I await inspiration – it being my turn to write the Pastoral Letter.

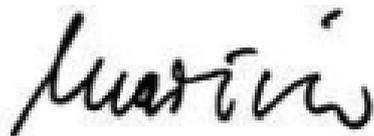
Do I in fact have anything to say? And what indeed is a Pastoral Letter? The Epistles in the New Testament, mainly from St Paul, were written to rally the troops, to interpret the faith and keep it alive in a cynical and disbelieving world. Is that, I wonder, what I am supposed to be doing? Gosh!

But even Paul, never one to be shy about putting pen to paper, recognises that the best letters are not written with ink, but directly on the hearts of the faithful by Jesus Christ. (2 Corinthians 3. 2-3). Meaning, I think, that we each discern instinctively the deep things of the Spirit and know inwardly what belongs to our faith. Which would seem to make me rather redundant—unless perhaps I opt for something homely and topical, like the weather?

In which case the commemoration of the Transfiguration on August 6th is timely. You can read how the disciples were given a preview of Christ's glory on the Holy Mountain in St Luke's Gospel (9. 28 -36) It is a story about how light transforms our perceptions, opening our eyes to deeper realities where, just as summer sun makes West Watford positively paradisaal, so too when we allow the light of Christ to shine directly in our hearts, does our view of the world and of our place in it become transfigured. Definitely brighter.

Enjoy your Summer!

With love and prayers

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Martin', written in a cursive style.

Brownies

17TH WATFORD BROWNIES

The Marathon Challenge evening went well with some very “interesting” collages, and several of the Brownies have brought in their sponsor money.

The girls have received their “Girls in Action” badges for the challenges they did about “Choices for Girls”. We had an evening of Pack Holiday skills which included table laying, making sandwiches, peeling carrots and slicing peppers and cucumber. We followed this with a tea party. The girls ate what they had prepared with the addition of dips, cakes and grape juice to celebrate Tawny Owl’s forthcoming marriage.

The term ended with a picnic in Cassiobury Park. Despite the heat everyone had lots of energy and enjoyed playing with the parachute and lots of other games. We have said goodbye to Aisha, Sana and Tianna who are all going to Guides.

Marilyn Tozer



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From the Mission Committee

The Watford & Three Rivers Refugee Project

At St Michael's we make an annual contribution towards the work of this Project as well as donating goods and tinned food. The Project is looking for more volunteers- see the following article by the Revd Guy Buckler. If you think you would like to be involved do please speak to me.

Martin

on behalf of the Mission Committee

WTRRP DROP-IN

One definition of a Drop In suggests that it offers an opportunity for a person 'to visit informally and spontaneously'. Another definition points out that it can be an abbreviation of 'drop in the ocean'.

Our own Drop In, which we opened last November, fulfils both these definitions. St John's Church in Sutton Road offers us an informal setting where we can meet our clients and provide them with a friendly welcome and some appropriate assistance. At the same time we recognize that our initiative is only a small contribution towards the help and support that refugees and asylum seekers so often need – but that doesn't mean it's insignificant!

From 11.00 to 1.00 every Tuesday and Friday, one or two of our volunteers can be found on duty at the Drop In – coffee and biscuits at the ready. Sometimes we've welcomed clients who are already in contact with us, on a few occasions new clients arrive who have been referred to us, perhaps by their church or by someone else who knows us.

It may seem strange, after eight months, to say that these are early days – but making ourselves known is not a simple task and on many occasions volunteers have sat for two hours with no client dropping in. However, on one or two occasions volunteers have been kept busy for the whole session, which suggests that as the Drop In becomes more widely known there will be an increasing take-up. To try to make ourselves better known, flyers have been distributed around Watford and we regularly feed information to churches, other faith communities and local groups.

Where do we go from here? Well, at present, we have just ten volunteers who cover the two sessions each week and we're extremely grateful for the generous time commitment they make. But it would be great to have more – for example, if we could increase our base to sixteen volunteers, we'd only be asking each person to cover one session a month on average.

Another challenge is to have enough volunteers to be able to offer, where appropriate, a befriender to those who contact the Project through the Drop In. We look forward to celebrating our first anniversary in a few months with good news to report on the progress of our response to these and other challenges.

PCC MEETING 5th JUNE 2013

The following were discussed at the PCC on 5th June 2013-07-12

- Welcoming people to church
- Child Protection Policy
- Quotes for outstanding works
- No Parking Sign in Church forecourt
- Flower Festival at St Albans – Sept 2014
- Patronal Festival – tree planting on triangle

Jean Alexander

PCC MEETING 17th JULY 2013

The following topics were discussed at the PCC on 17th July

- Tributes to deceased members of the congregation
- Food Bank – lack of local response
- Parking on church forecourt
- Quotes for work to be carried out and application for grants
- Modification of the moveable screens
- Old photographs required for centenary display
- Stewardship campaign
- Sword – how to replace Dennis

Jean Alexander



FINAL COPY DATE FOR SEPTEMBER SWORD:-

MIDDAY on Sunday 25th August 2013

Please submit copy before this date if possible -

hard copy or e-mail to:-

dhbeach@sky.com

GOING ON A QUIET DAY

We have organised a quiet day for our parish at Edgeware Abbey, on Saturday 21st September 2013, from 10.00am – 4.00pm. Some of you may be wondering “is this for me?”, “what happens at a quiet day?”, “will I need to stop talking for a whole day?”, and may have many other questions.

A quiet day is essentially a time for reflection and prayer, in a setting which is not only quiet, but also prayerful. They often take place in places which are set aside for quiet, such as the houses of religious communities, or dedicated retreat houses, often with lovely gardens and areas to walk. This is so that people who come for quiet can know that they will be able to find it.

I have always found quiet days to be peaceful and refreshing, a real getting away from it all! Please do not think about it as a time when we have to grimly discipline ourselves to be silent for a day, because it doesn't work like that, or feel like that.

On a quiet day, we normally start by meeting with some chat over tea and coffee, when we just make sure everyone is comfortable with the location, and where to find everything. Then, during the day, there are usually two or three devotional addresses from the person who is leading the quiet day, some times of corporate prayer, and a Eucharist, interspersed with free time. People spend the free time in their own ways, walking in the grounds or beyond, in the chapel (or bookshop!) The important thing about the free time is that if someone wants to spend that time in silent reflection, that wish is respected by all, so we do not engage people in conversation unless we are sure they wish to talk, and we do not talk in areas where it may disturb other people's silence. This is not usually too difficult for an hour or so at a time!

If we have issues we want to discuss (or if we are about to go potty with not speaking to anyone!), either the leader of the quiet day or the parish priest is normally available during the day.

Further details about our quiet day will be available soon, and there is a sign-up list at back of Church. If you've been on a quiet day and enjoyed it, or if you've never tried one, come along and see what it's like!

Best Wishes

Fr Geoff

CHOIR AND NAVE

Among the things that distinguish poetry from prose is that in poetry a word or phrase is more likely to have several concurrent meanings. An example is the line in Shakespeare's

Sonnet No. 73, 'Bare ruined choirs, where late the sweet birds sang'. It refers to himself; the whole sonnet deals with his advancing years. It is part of a metaphor about a tree, in autumn, when it has lost its leaves. And it recalls the buildings of monasteries that had been recently dissolved in the course of the Reformation - their remains were naturally much more numerous and extensive in Shakespeare's time, and even after 450 years they move us today.

But why 'choirs'? To us the word generally means a group of people singing together, as indeed the monks and nuns had done in the monasteries. Shakespeare, however, clearly uses it for a building. Cranmer, in the Prayer Book (written a few years before Shakespeare was born), wrote that at Morning and Evening Prayer 'in choirs and places where they sing', the anthem would follow the third collect. Evidently, by 'choir', he likewise meant a church building, that is, a cathedral or church large enough for a body of singers to perform an anthem. Apart from that, the Prayer Book envisages hardly any music in church services: in Morning and Evening Prayer, the Psalms and Canticles and the Creed are to be said or sung, and in the Holy Communion the same choice is limited to the Creed and Gloria. Cranmer did not expect the singing of metrical hymns that is so familiar to us. He wanted the altar (for which he used the expression 'holy table') to be set in the middle of the church: this would enable the congregation to gather round for the celebration of the Holy Communion, the most sacred moment of worship.

Indeed, in the Church of England, the use of hymns as we know it only became customary in the course of the nineteenth century (the first edition of *Hymns Ancient and Modern* was published in 1861), though the Methodists and other nonconformists had sung hymns much earlier. In the seventeenth century, George Herbert, some of whose poems are so familiar today as hymns, did not expect them to be sung. It is necessary to appreciate all this in order to assess the current experiments in the layout of the church furniture here at St. Michael's, which should prompt us to consider how we use our large and impressive church building, and how we use music.

Our building is modelled on mediaeval practice, when the typical parish church was an oblong building with a smaller eastern extension, now known respectively as nave and chancel. The history of this plan goes back to Roman times. Sometimes transepts are added to the plan, which becomes that of a crucifix. St. Michael's is like this, though the transepts do not extend beyond the north and south walls. The high altar would be at the east end of the chancel. The nave was used for many parochial activities (we do it too!), such as markets and social gatherings - there was, of course, no other substantial building available for such purposes.

In the later seventeenth century, a simpler plan became popular. This is a plain oblong, in which the altar stands against the east wall, although there is nothing in the architecture to

distinguish this position. For obvious reasons, such a church is often called a 'preaching box'. Until this time, during worship, the people stood. But by the mid-eighteenth century, Hogarth's paintings show pulpits and pews more or less as we know them. Then in the mid-nineteenth century, the Tractarian movement revived mediaeval ideas about both the conduct of worship and the design of church buildings. Half a century later when St. Michael's was built a century ago, its design and arrangements were based on these ideas - developed as they had been by the Anglo-Catholics.

In the days of the monasteries, monks and nuns spent many hours in the church every day (as they still do), so furniture was essential for them. Their way of worship required them to face each other, and for the choir's sake (using the word now in the modern sense) our chancel is arranged in this way, with the organ above the choir on the south wall so that the organist and the choir can be in touch. As in many churches, the nave of St. Michael's also works as a preaching box, with rows of seats facing eastwards. Nowadays, congregations being so much smaller, none of this makes so much sense, and in the current experiment, which goes some way towards reviving Cranmer's idea about the central position of the Holy Table, its distance from the organ presents us with a particular difficulty.

A central altar (or holy table) can be found in many places, and not only in the Church of England. Ideally, the building should be designed accordingly - a well known example is the Roman Catholic cathedral at Liverpool, and nearer to us is the Wren church of St. Stephen Wallbrook in the City of London. In such circumstances, the rows of eastward-facing seats are neither practicable nor desirable; but anything else may mean changing the habits of a lifetime, which does not come readily to many people.

So the experiment challenges us to consider what kind of Christians we are. We are called to look for the best way of presenting the Gospel to the Parish, which may not be what it was in 1913. And both for prospective new members and for ourselves, we must consider whether Cranmer's way or the Tractarian way or something in between is the best way for the pursuit of holiness here and now. The questionnaire that is being circulated on Sunday 30 June should enable us to think on these things and declare the faith that is in us.

Graham Mordue..

DIARY OF EVENTS FOR AUGUST

AUGUST

1st	Thu	Fairhaven during morning	
4th	SUN	TRINITY 10	
		Holy Communion	8.00 am
		SUNG EUCHARIST (Pres: Fr Geoff; Preacher: Martin Heath)	9.30 am
		Baptism	2.00 pm
		Joint Service at Trinity Methodist	6.30 pm
5th	Mon	Service at River Court	3.00 pm
7th	Wed	Coffee in Church. Food Bank distribution	10.30-12noon
8th	Thu	St Anthony's during morning	
11th	SUN	TRINITY 11	
		Holy Communion	8.00 am
		SUNG EUCHARIST (Pres and Preacher: : Fr Geoff)	9.30 am
		(The Jacobite Syrian Orthodox Church	1-5 pm)
		Evening Prayer (Off: Fay Storey)	6.00 pm
14th	Wed	Coffee in Church. Food Bank distribution	10.30-12noon
		Service at Home Manor	3.00 pm
18th	SUN	Trinity 12	
		Holy Communion	8.00 am
		SUNG EUCHARIST (Pres & Preacher: Fr George)	9.30 am
		The 6 00 Series	6.00 pm
20th	Tue	Service at The Chase Care Centre	2.30 pm
		Pause (134 Mildred Avenue)	7.30 pm
21st	Wed	Coffee in Church. Food Bank distribution	10.30-12noon
25th	SUN	TRINITY 13	
		Holy Communion	8.00 am
		SUNG EUCHARIST (Pres & Preacher: Fr Geoff) followed by Bring-and-Buy Sale	9.30 am
		(The Jacobite Syrian Orthodox Church	1-5 pm)
		Evening Prayer (Off: Graham Mordue)	6.00 pm
		Wedding Rehearsal	7.00 pm
26th	Mon	<i>Bank Holiday</i> No Toddlers' Group	
		Wedding of David Benoy and Fay Knight	12.30 pm
27th	Tue	Publicity Committee (6 Cassiobury Park Avenue)	7.30 pm

ADVANCE DATES FOR SEPTEMBER & OCTOBER

14th	Sat	HERITAGE OPEN DAY Church open all day for visitors Historic Churches Sponsored Bike 'n Hike (all day) Coffee morning in aid of The Children's Society RSCM Examinations	10.30-12noon
28th	Sat	<i>"Music for an Autumn Evening" - organ recital given by Andrew Benoy; with refreshments</i>	7.00 pm
29th	Sun	Michaelmas Sung Eucharist (Preacher: The Venerable Jonathan Smith, Archdeacon of St Albans)	9.30 am
		CHOIR REUNION Starting at 3 pm followed by a rehearsal for CHORAL EVENSONG followed by refreshments for augmented choir and congregation	6.00 pm
		October	
13th	Sun	Harvest Thanksgiving	10.30 am

Morning Prayer is said daily in the Lady Chapel (Monday to Friday) at 9.00 am.

A service of Holy Communion is held every Thursday at 10.00 am. Both this and the 8 am on Sunday morning are Order One in Traditional Language.

Tea, Coffee & Squash are served in Church every Wednesday from 10.30 until noon which is also the morning for Food .Bank distribution.

The Toddlers' Group meets in Church (or Choir Vestry) every Monday from 10.00 – 11.30 am except on Bank Holidays. Check on 01923 232460 to make sure that there is a meeting of the Group during the holiday month of August.

There will be no Choir Practice during August to give the choir and choirmaster a well-deserved rest.

SUNG EUCHARIST DUTY LIST - AUGUST

4th August (9.30)

Deacons	V Alvarez, M Simon
Chalice	M Simon, P Gough
Intercessor	J Adams
Lesson Reader	A Makin
Sidespeople	J Talbot, J Chandler
Tea/ Coffee Duty	J Alexander, P Hart, E Jones

11th August (9.30)

Deacons	J Wareham, V Allen-Smith
Chalice	V. Allen-Smith,
Intercessor	P Chandler
Lesson Reader	J Alexander
Sidespeople	J Ochola, H Moring
Tea/ Coffee Duty	P Gandy, V Vidler, G Heath

18th August (9.30)

Deacons	V Allen-Smith, V Alvarez
Chalice	V Alvarez, M Watkin
Intercessor	G Mordue
Lesson Readers	I Bilson, B Bilson
Sidespeople	V Blacklock, P Allen-Smith
Tea/ Coffee Duty	A Makin, M Watkin, E Watkin

25th August (9.30)

Deacons	V Alvarez, J Wareham
Chalice	J Wareham, A Kiddle
Intercessor	S Moring
Lesson Readers	J Mordue, G Mordue
Sidespeople	C Dixon A Makin
Tea/ Coffee Duty	V Matthews, M Mathews, B Bilson

1st September (9.30)

Deacons	M Simon, V Allen-Smith
Chalice	V Allen-Smith, P Gough
Intercessor	P Jenkins
Lesson Reader	P Hart
Sidespeople	J Talbot, J Chandler
Tea/ Coffee Duty	J Alexander, P Hart, E Jones



ST MICHAEL'S MOTHERS' UNION DIARY



Friday 9th August - MARY SUMNER DAY - Picnic at CHESLYN GARDENS,
NASCOT WOOD ROAD, 12.30 - 2.30 for all members in the Deanery.
Bring a rug or garden chair, if wet in the House.

Pat Gandy



**The
Children's
Society**

I would like to thank all box holders for helping to raise the sum of £424.47 for the Society's work.

This is down on last year, but your support is still appreciated.

Yours most sincerely

Norma Twitchin



We are holding a Coffee Morning in aid of The Children's Society's annual event on Saturday, 14 September, from 10.30 to 12 noon.

There will be stalls and a raffle. Please support this if you can.

Many thanks

Norma



THE CENTENARY WEEKEND **28 and 29 September 2013**

Plans are being made for a special weekend of celebration for the Michaelmas weekend. Please make a note of the dates in your diary now.

Saturday, 28 September An organ recital given by Andrew Benoy, with refreshments. Tickets £8 from 01923 231917

Sunday, 29 September 9.30 am Sung Eucharist. Preacher: The Ven Jonathan Smith, Archdeacon of St Albans

Sunday, 29 September Reunion of past and present members of St Michael's Choir with Choral Evensong at 6 pm from the augmented choir.

As you would expect all these activities will be followed by refreshments planned by the Social Committee and provided by members of St Michael's.

STAMPS - LEPROSY MISSION **&** **BOOKS - CHRISTIAN AID**

A brief reminder that we are continuing ongoing support to these two charities.

The **Leprosy Mission** has been raising funds for many years from the sale of postage stamps, postcards , cigarette cards, medals etc. In 2012 the annual income from sales raised a sum of £107,587. Since the scheme began over £1 million has been raised.

There is a collecting box for these items on the table at the back of the church and lots more information on the notice board. Please help - see if any of your friends or family work in commercial premises and receive lots of mail - don't bin the stamps with the envelopes - save them for the Leprosy Mission!

Christian Aid has been supported by our church for many years. They are now collecting books for sending overseas or to sell to raise funds. Details on the notice board in church. We are provided with special cardboard boxes to fill and these are then collected by courier at no charge to us. So far we have dispatched 12 full boxes and 2 more are ready to go! Please contact me or Vicki Matthews if you have books to donate. You can bring them to church or contact me or Vicki and we will make arrangements to come to collect to be added to the boxes. Thank you.

Pat Beach

WEST WATFORD FREE CHURCH (BAPTIST)

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NEWSLETTER

Regular services:

Every Sunday:

10.30am Family Service.

11.00am The children leave the main meeting to go into the Sunday School.

Holy communion is celebrated on the 4th Sunday of each month.

Tea, coffee and biscuits are served in the church at the end of the service, please stay and get to know new people or chat to long-standing friends. Either way enjoy a time of fellowship.

For all other information contact :- garthwoodhead@gmail.com

3pm L'EGLISE FRATERNITE meet for worship and bible teaching. This is of course the official name of the French speaking church who meet here. Everyone is welcome and they do have an interpreter for those who are not fluent in French. For further information please contact:- pastorjohnaluma@watfordfraternitychurch.co.uk

Friday @ 7pm Glory Of God Illuminated Church (Tamil) meet for worship and bible teaching. Children are welcome and have a separate time in the back hall. For further information please contact:- joshuaraji88@yahoo.com

During the week:

Monday 10am - 12noon: Prayer meeting

Tuesday 9.15am - 12.15pm: Cafe West.

6.30pm: Slimming World

Wednesday 7pm: Bible study / Prayer meeting

2nd Wednesday of each month 1pm - 2pm: Prayer for Israel

We'll continue to pray for those in countries where to be a Christian is at best difficult and at worst illegal and punishable by death.

Open Doors Handbook of Prayer - Where Faith Costs The Most:

July 28th - August 3rd: Laos. The main religion here is Buddhism. Christians who do not participate in traditional ceremonies face aggression from the Buddhists. Evangelism is prohibited on the grounds that conversion brings social division and breaks up the family unit. The majority of Christians are from tribal backgrounds and face severe persecution from animists and spiritists who lose trade due to conversions. Pray for believers from the Katin and Hmong tribes who are especially vulnerable.

August 4th - 10th: Turkmenistan. The state exerts strict control in order to avoid the emergence of any independent economic, social or cultural groups, this includes churches. All unregistered religious activity is illegal and the government uses secret services and police to keep the church under surveillance. Raids on even registered churches have increased and obtaining registration is almost impossible. Religious education and religious publications are banned. Pray for Muslim-background believers as they face the most pressure and that the government will be willing to register churches.

August 11th - 17th: Qatar. The state religion is conservative Islam and most Qataris are Sunni or Shia Muslims. Christian worship is only allowed in designated religious complexes, of which there are only 2, as it makes them easier to monitor, this of course denies access for many as it is too far to travel. Muslims who convert are considered to be apostates and may face the death penalty. Pray for bible resources in the Qatari and Asian languages to become available and that foreign workers would be able to share the love of Jesus.

August 18th - 24th: Vietnam. Christians are seen as Western agents and with the help of tribal leaders the state watches churches very closely. A permit is required for larger gatherings and these are only granted at the last minute, if at all, in order to deter people from attending. Converts from Buddhism come under pressure from family and friends and gangsters are hired to harass pastors and new believers. Pray for those who are in prison just for being a believer. Pray for safety for those from Open Doors who distribute bibles as this is illegal.

August 25th - 31st: Oman. The legal system names all citizens as Muslim and all legislation is based on Islamic law. Apostasy is not a

criminal offence, but Omani converts face legal discrimination and could lose their jobs, families and even their lives if their new faith is discovered. Most of the Christian population is expatriate, very few of the believers are indigenous. All religious organisations must be registered and Christian activity is monitored. Pray for the indigenous believers to find ways to meet together and that God's word would be spread via Christian TV and internet websites. Pray also for discernment to know that what they are hearing is the truth.

From The BMS Prayer Guide:

July 28th - August 3rd: Tunisia. Post revolution, there is more freedom in Tunisia. While the old regime was increasingly restricting our partner organisation, the new regime has made approaches to them and asked the leadership to extend the work. Happily our partner is expecting to double their personnel in the next 12 months. Pray that the new people will settle in quickly with unity of purpose and spirit.

August 4th - 10th: New Opportunities. Each year we are able to undertake a number of new initiatives whilst continuing the majority of commitments made in previous years. But new work always carries risks. Will it work? Will it make a difference? Will we have the people to develop the project? These are all areas that need prayer.

August 11th - 17th: Mozambique. The work of the Baptist Convention of Mozambique is expanding rapidly as the partnership with BMS develops. Pray for the Baptist pastors as they lead worship and preach throughout Mozambique that through them the gospel would be proclaimed and heard.

August 18th - 24th: Health ministries. In marginalised communities around the world where health provision is inadequate BMS mission workers seek to improve health care and wholeness in the name of Jesus. Pray for all who are involved in training that they will have the necessary provisions and good relationships with those they work with.

August 25th - 31st: Teams. Many of our teams are experiencing new things in September: some begin their training, others will soon travel overseas and others will be readjusting to life back at home. Pray for them all that they be the fragrance of Christ, either in the light of what they have experienced or as they serve abroad in the coming months.

On the home front pray for

All in positions of authority:

The Queen and her family; the government and local councils; the police; church leaders and their families.

Children: For their safety during the holiday time when many of them will be out and about with friends on the streets and playing fields.

Those looking for jobs: Many will now have left education behind them and need work. Pray that the Lord would open doors for them.

And finally.....

On the first day God created the dog and said: "Sit all day by the door of your house and bark at anyone who comes in or walks past. For this I will give you a life span of 20 years". The dog said "That's a long time to be barking. How about only 10 years and I'll give you the other 10 back?" So God agreed.

On the second day God created the monkey and said: "Entertain people, do tricks and make them laugh and I'll give you a 20 year life span". The monkey said: "Monkey tricks for 20 years? That's a pretty long time to perform. How about I give you 10 back like the dog did?" And God agreed.

On the third day God created the cow and said: "You must go into the field all day long, eat grass, have calves and give milk to support the farmer's family and I will give you a life span of 60 years". The cow said: "That's a tough life you want me to live for 60 years, How about 20 and I'll give back the other 40?" God agreed again.

On the fourth day God created humans and said: "Eat, sleep, play, marry and enjoy your life. For this I will give you 20 years". But the humans said: "Only 20 years? Could you possibly give me my 20, the 40 the cow gave back, the ten the monkey gave back and the ten the dog gave back; that makes 80, OK?" "OK" said God "you asked for it!"

So that is why for our first 20 years we eat, sleep, play and enjoy ourselves. For the next forty years we slave in the sun to support our family. For the next 10 years we do monkey tricks to entertain the grandchildren and for the last 10 years we sit on the front porch and bark at everyone.

Life has now been explained to you!

God bless you all
Lesley



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Martin Tunmore
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