

WEEKLY SERMON

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Something precious

I thank God for the gifts he has given me; the places he calls me to be and the opportunities I have to serve in his name.

As both scientist and priest, I still teach and research in the Cancer Sciences, and last week I had the privilege of attending our annual European Conference on Radiotherapy.

Something precious in itself – bringing together thousands from all disciplines to share experiences and research; new ways to improve the outcomes for our patients.

It is precious to see the desire and enthusiasm of so many, sharing ideas and developments; all to serve our patients better.

Being there, I see their God-given gifts – their vocation and calling. It has been the same for me too, my whole life - working in God's service for patients through my science, as well as serving through my faith ... it's something very precious.

Precious too were the disciples around Jesus at that momentous last supper, the scene for this Sunday's gospel where, towards the end of his discourse with them, Jesus prays to the Father for them - his precious high-priestly prayer. For as part of his own mission, Jesus called the disciples to come and see, be with him; to follow, learn, understand on this amazing journey with him.

But now the journey must continue differently - through their vocation and calling; their most precious gifts and talents, the things Jesus no doubt saw in all their hearts.

He has taught them the character of the Father; whilst developing their own relationship with the Son. They are special, precious - as indeed we all are to God our Father, as brothers and sisters, all people with Christ. They will need the power of the coming spirit to keep them in that special relationship - yes, as one with God the Father and Jesus; but also with all within the faith, as the body of Christ, the common love of God and neighbour will bind them all, in the power of the spirit.

May we therefore celebrate the precious beings we are in the eyes of a loving Father and his beloved Son; through the many things we are called to do. May we rejoice that we are all special, chosen to be distinctive, precious and wonderful individuals - all loved by our creator God. And, like the first disciples, may all our works and endeavours in serving others be done with love, in Jesus' name. Amen

Rev Canon Dr Mike Kirby

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HEALTHY CHURCHES TRANSFORMING COMMUNITIES