



Roseheath Ramblings
It's nearly November
So we shall remember...

Dear Friends,

As I was preparing to write this letter, I was thinking about the month of November. I have paraphrased the old rhyme about Guy Fawkes Night for my title. It now reflects our nationwide remembrance of those who have fallen in war to protect our country and our way of life.

But before we get to November 11th, there are other curiosities about November to look at.

November is an “in-between” month. It comes after Autumn and before Winter. In church calendars, it begins with the Feast of All Saints on Sunday 1st, and carries us into Advent which begins on 29th. Also, between the 1st and the 30th of November there are commemoration days for 17 saints or martyrs; All Souls, when we remember all those whom we have lost over countless years, and just before Advent begins, the church year ends with the Feast of Christ the King. So a lot is going on this month in the Church Calendar, and there will no doubt be a lot going on in the secular, or non-church calendar too. But firework displays may have to be watched from the safety of a computer or television screen, and bonfires have (fortunately) lost their original significance of burning a man whose religious beliefs were different from those of the state, even if he did try to blow up the houses of parliament.

Because of its “in-between” character, November is a good month for leaving behind those things that have happened in the past year that have upset us, or made us feel angry or ashamed. Try to make time, even just a few minutes, each day, to look at your life as it is, just now, with all that is going on around you, or maybe, not going on around you because of the pandemic. Imagine your life as a cupboard full of everything you have done, not done, said or not said in the past year. Take out the memories one by one. Look at them and decide if you wish to keep them, or if you wish to throw them away. Put back in the cupboard those you wish to keep. Throw away those which make you sad or ashamed, or angry. As you do this, ask God to forgive you. Close the cupboard and go back to whatever you were doing, and repeat again tomorrow. By the end of November you will be ready to begin the new church year with the certainty that God loves you and forgives you. And reminded by All Souls, we also know that God has prepared a place for us in his Kingdom. It also leaves your heart less cluttered as you prepare for the Christmas season.

Whilst the official Remembrance Day is the 11th November, this year Remembrance Services will be held on Sunday 8th as being the nearest Sunday to that date. The big events have been cancelled this year, although Buckingham Palace announced this week that the Queen will lead a private Service of Remembrance on behalf of the Nation. For many people, especially those veterans of conflict down the years, the very public gathering at the Cenotaph in Whitehall will be sadly missed. It is, perhaps, the one place and time when they feel appreciated for what they have done, and given, for the lives and the livelihoods of their fellow human beings. Is there anything we can do to help them understand how much they are respected and valued? Perhaps just buying and wearing a poppy will be enough – that is if Poppies are allowed this year! Or maybe just pass on any stories you may have to your grandchildren and great grandchildren. Lest we forget...



And as we remember those who gave their lives for their country in wars and conflicts, so we turn our minds to the coming of Advent at the end of the month. Advent, the time when the world prepares to receive God's Son, sent to earth to die for everyone in that world from time immemorial to time eternal. From creation to the new creation November sort of bridges the gap! It takes us from the end of Autumn to the beginning of Winter but in terms of the Church Calendar it wraps around the chill of winter the warmth of God's great love for us. So the end of November can truly be another new beginning to add to last month's!

Wishing you every blessing,

Linda Jacquet

(retired Priest in the Bungay Benefice)