

Connecting faith and daily life

To be our light

Jeni Parsons *reflects on* Malachi 3:1-5 and Luke 2:22-40

Here, on this feast called Candlemas, the tiny child in the Jerusalem Temple is called “a light for revelation to the Gentiles”. Who are these Gentiles? It is you and I, who have been adopted into God’s family. Jesus, this little one, whose eyes are barely focused, is to be our light.

And what will we see in this light? Well, that’s the story unfolding. We will see Jesus being tender with those whose lives are a mess. We will see him spend time with people who are despised by others. We’ll see him eating and drinking with beggars, prostitutes, sick and dying people, street children and money-makers. And we’ll see something else, too – we’ll see religious people who are judgemental, military power and state violence.

The prophet Malachi speaks of God’s messenger bringing the light of judgement – not against those people whom Jesus calls friends, but against the people who push them about. They are those who oppress the hired workers by not paying them enough, who oppress people who are vulnerable, marginalised and unrepresented. They are those who reject foreigners and asylum seekers from their community.

This is what the tiny child will bring to light – the very issues we find throughout history and in our own time. Can we bear such scrutiny? ☺



God, in Jesus you were not afraid to be found as a defenceless child. As he befriended those who were unloved in their society, give us strength to support those who are vulnerable and challenge those who exploit them. Amen.

Books of the Old Testament *Micah*

by Georgina Byrne

Having enjoyed a time of plenty, the people have forgotten how to live righteously as God’s people. Instead, they “walk haughtily” (2:3) and their leaders abhor justice (3:9). God issues a challenge: “What have I done to you? In what have I wearied you?” (6:3). God has saved them, brought them out of Egypt, and made them prosperous, but they’ve taken their privilege for granted and neglected those in need.

Yet there is hope. Micah shines with a vision of the future that is both peaceful and inclusive. We

read of the Lord’s house being established with “many peoples” streaming to it, of turning “swords into plowshares... spears into pruning hooks”. We read that: “nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more” (4:1-4).

It is the challenge to live a just life – individual and corporate – that is Micah’s lasting gift to every generation: “what does the Lord require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God?” (6:8).

Georgina is the Anglican Tutor at the Queen’s Foundation and a Chaplain to The King. ☺

World Wetlands Day

by Christine Clark

Today is World Wetlands Day. Christine Clark looks at their value and environmental significance.

What fun it is, properly shod in good wellies, to visit a wetland area, watching the wildlife, large and small, seeing how creatures thrive in their habitats. It is a joy to see young children crouch down to examine an animal or bird going about its business, oblivious its audience. Wetlands really are a fantastic part of God’s wonderful creation.

Great family time though this is, the need for wetlands is far

greater. World Wetlands Day raises awareness of the value of wetlands for humanity and the planet, stressing the benefits of biologically diverse ecosystems – not only to provide habitats for species, but as coastal buffers against storms and flooding, and to filter water by breaking down harmful pollutants.

So why not look up one of the many events happening all around the country – including walks, talks and practical conservation.

To find out more visit: www.worldwetlandsday.org ☺

“For in Christ Jesus you are all children of God through faith. As many of you as were baptised into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ.”

Galatians 3:26-27