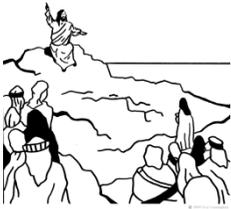


The Vicarage, 1 Flaxmoss Close, Helmshore. BB4 4PX ☎ 212213

Dear Friends of St Thomas & all Musbury Matters Readers



In the Sermon of the Mount, Jesus instructs his disciples . . . **'let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven'** (Matt. 5:16). In response to this, someone once said to me 'actions speak louder than words; let your words speak and your actions teach,' for within all of this, *we are called to be people of the light and not darkness.*

Since I wrote my letter for the June magazine, there has been an awful lot of darkness and sadness in our country, following the terrible fire at the Grenfell Tower in Kensington and prior to that, the appalling terrorist attacks in Manchester and London. Such actions are so contrary to our calling to coexist as human beings, irrespective of one's faith, race and culture. Yet what it has taught us is to give thanks for the resilience of the men, women and children. The response of the people of Manchester, for example, has been so wonderful. Indeed, a leading Christian commentator recently likened the **One Love Manchester concert** to religious worship – with all its joyful, resilient seriousness throughout. I have been struck by the positive effect that the concert has had on the young people I have talked to, who were at the Old Trafford Cricket Ground. *Full of life, light and promise.*

As disciples we are called to be bright lights illuminating the darkness. On that, how wonderful it was to join with brothers and sisters from St James' and St Peter's on Trinity Sunday, to take the love of God – Father, Son and Holy Spirit – to the people of Helmshore during our **Walk of Witness**. It is always good when hard work and endeavour is rewarded and I am particularly

grateful to our Churchwardens for making the Walk possible. We were indeed rewarded with good weather – it didn't rain, bar a couple of short showers – and an excellent turnout. How wonderful too to welcome our **Rose Queens from both St Thomas' and St James'.**

Full of life, light and promise.

As I type this we have just celebrated our **Confirmation Service** for 2017 at St James, when thirteen candidates from our three churches were Confirmed by **Bishop Philip**. It has been such a privilege for **Rev'd Judith and I** to guide our candidates through our Confirmation programme and how wonderful



Confirmation

to

teach our adults and children together. What a joy too to welcome Bishop Philip back to Rossendale. We look forward holding some post-Confirmation sessions and forward planning to 2018 when we will hold another programme. *Full of life, light and promise.*

Separately, we are so blessed to work alongside our local schools in Helmshore. On June 16th Judith and I had the pleasure of welcoming all the Year 4 pupils from **Helmshore Primary School** to St Thomas', where they learned more about Baptism, Worship and Christian Commitment. We had a great time with them – indeed, they asked some wonderful questions. We look forward to further visits later in the year. *Full of life, light and promise.*

Finally, there has been a great deal of emphasis within the **Blackburn Diocese** in recent months upon "**Open Churches**" – that realisation that an open church expresses God's welcome and presence, His healing and forgiveness. Allowing friends and strangers to enter our church building is a simple yet effective act of hospitality and can become an integral part of our mission. It also

provides an excellent opportunity for visitors to pray in our beautiful church.



We have recently purchased an **“Open Church” banner** from the diocese, and as a ‘first off’ we will be opening St Thomas’s from Thursday 20th July to Saturday 22nd July inclusive, between 10.00am and 4.00pm. We will also **open our Church** between 8.00am and 2.00pm on Sunday 23rd July. A warm welcome is assured. Do come along and do invite friends too. *Full of life, light and promise.*

As we approach the summer holidays, may I wish you a refreshing break if you are going way – or indeed the same if you are staying at home.

Thank you for everything you do in the St Thomas family and within our local community here in Helmshore and Musbury.

*Summer has filled her veins with light
and her heart is washed with noon*

C. Day-Lewis

With prayers and every blessing for the summer,
Your Friend,
FATHER TERRY