



St Andrew's Parish Church Guernsey
Remembrance Sunday – Sermon for 10.00am 8th November 2020
Bible Readings: Wisdom of Solomon 6: 12-16 & St Matthew 25: 1-13
Given by Rev Juliette E C Robilliard

Wisdom, the greatest female ever!

'Wisdom is radiant and unfading and she is easily discerned by those who love her.'

So, read Mike O'Hara, Vice-Dean of the Douzaine from that extract of the Wisdom of Solomon. Gentlemen, how wise of King Solomon to call 'wisdom' female! My memory, however, isn't defective, I do recall reading from the Gospel of the five foolish bridesmaids, although the five wise bridesmaids who were gathered into the Wedding Banquet do even the score. In his parable Jesus' speaks in allegory likening himself to a bridegroom and Heaven to a wedding feast to which all are called but not all are prepared to be counted in the number. You may think these are strange readings for this Remembrance Sunday: wisdom, however, is the attribute that wins wars but, as we all know, wisdom does not come without a cost.

World Wars

Those leaders of generations past when faced with the defence of the realm against the aggressor, were in the invidious position of weighing up where to deploy the armed forces for the most effective result. Their decisions were made in the full knowledge that not all of those men and women whether serving on the land, sea or in the air would return to their loved ones after the war was over. Later, during the Act of Remembrance, we will honour those from this Parish who fought for freedom in two world wars and who paid the ultimate sacrifice.

Recent Conflicts

There have, of course, been further conflicts in more recent times. The Falklands, the Gulf Wars and so many more including the constant threat from terrorism that turns the wisdom of God's selfless love upside down. Love turned to hate strikes down the innocent to proclaim a loveless ideology. Most of us in church this morning have never been in face-to-face combat and, therefore, we thank and honour those of you here who are veterans having served our Queen in the island and beyond, in the cause of peace.

Global unseen enemy

There is, however, in this generation an unseen enemy that has the potential to affect us all either directly or indirectly striking down those we love and those who protect us. I refer to the unseen enemy of Covid-19 and those around the world who are striving to conquer the pandemic. How thankful we are for the wisdom of Dr Brink

MBE devising policies for our protection. And, how grateful we are to all those in the medical profession, the doctors and nurses who are putting their lives on the line for us. Here in Church we have representatives of the medical profession, we remember and honour you too for your commitment to keep us safe.

Looking beyond the here and now with hope

In civilian life during the world wars people were called upon to keep community spirit alive and the Women's Institute, of whom we have members here this morning, were instrumental in fostering the right ethos. Today, similarly, all of us are playing our part in 'Guernsey Together'. We do not know how long the fight for health will continue and we do not know if we will all make it through to the final conquest of the disease. Perhaps, therefore, that somewhat unusual reading of 'the bridesmaids' is not so out of place after all, as it gives us hope, for God our Father offers us all a place at his heavenly banquet after death, when our final conflict has been vanquished, through the death and resurrection of his Son. None of us knows that day or the hour, therefore, to choose in life to be in community with God through Jesus Christ, is wisdom. Then like wisdom, and all those we honour and remember today, may we too be radiant and unfading and easily discerned and remembered by our God who loves us.

Amen.