

All Saints Alive

VICAR'S VIEWPOINT



Why remember?

Dear Friends,

Time heals –they say - and surely we live in the present and we can have hope for the future, so why should we remember?

November is a month when we remember.

It starts off with All Saints' Day when we recall the saints that have inspired our Christian journey, past and present. We may contemplate the Saints from the Bible, Jesus' original followers, or men and women whose lives can bring us inspiration.

Then there is Remembrance Sunday when we recall those who have sacrificed their lives in various conflicts for our freedom and peace.

Then at the end of the month we have our Memorial Service when we remember beloved friends and relatives who have died.

In sharing in these ceremonies, we will sense the reasons for remembering. For they are a way of giving thanks for all that our loved ones have given to us, all that strangers have done in being prepared to sacrifice themselves for the common good, all that God has given us in the holy lives of his saints.

As we engage we will recognise something more about our own lives as well as those we remember. These times also acknowledge the reality of death, and if we allow ourselves to ponder what happens when we die we can discover new meanings in life. We can also receive

the loving support of the wider community and the family of the church. Whilst sadness at the loss of a loved one will never entirely go away, in heartfelt remembrance our love lives on.



In describing the times of remembrance at Wooton Bassett, The Revd Thomas Woodhouse, touched on the truth of all acts of remembrance when he said;

"it is the silence I feel. In it you sense the otherness of the moment. The ceremony brings together families, comrades and strangers- it seems to me to be the point where life and death co- exist. It is an act of an act of shared humanity."

The desire to be remembered lives within our genetic makeup. It is the age-old reason people carve their initials in trees, place their hands in cement, and chalk their names on rocks. They want to leave their mark. They want to be remembered.

But for the living, the real marks they leave are the ones they've left on us. A hug. A smile. A timely word of advice. We want to

remember those we've loved and lost, not only for them, but also as importantly for ourselves, to mend, to be healed, to live more lovingly and more hopefully in the light of eternity.

Love, Jo

Happy?

It's official! Our faith and spirituality gives us all greater happiness.

Research* shows that religion and spirituality have a positive correlation to psychological well-being.

In 2013, 205 participants from a wide range of faith groups were recruited from various religious institutions and spiritual meetings. They were assigned to one of four groups with the following characteristics:

- A. a high level of religious involvement and spirituality,
- B. a low level of religious involvement with a high level of spirituality,
- C. a high level of religious involvement with a low level of spirituality, and
- D. a low level of religious involvement and spirituality.

Comparisons were made between the groups on three ways of assessing psychological well-being:

- ✓ levels of self-actualisation which means the realization or fulfilment of one's talents and potentialities, a drive or need present in everyone;
- ✓ meaning in life,
- ✓ personal growth.

It was discovered that, apart from a few exceptions, Groups A and B had higher scores on all three areas.

These results confirm the importance of spirituality and faith on psychological well-being.

**Linking religion and spirituality with psychological well-being: examining self-actualisation, meaning in life, and personal growth initiative.*

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Looking for a good book to read during Advent?

Want to know what are thought of as some of the best (and the worst) books in Christian literature?

Want to see how your library/views match up to the choices of a panel of experts assembled by the Church Times earlier this year?

Then visit <http://www.ct100books.co.uk/>

CT Panel:

the Very Revd Dr Martyn Percy (chairman);
 Jenny Monds;
 Canon Mark Oakley;
 Rupert Shortt;
 the Revd Dr Cally Hammond;
 the Revd Malcolm Guite;
 Canon David Winter;
 Dr Jane Williams.