

## Ramblings from The Rectory - This is the joy of the Easter hope – April 2016

April for me is a hopeful time. A time to look forward. I'm looking forward to some sunshine for rides out on the motorbike. I'm looking for flowers and more sun for my bees. I'm looking forward with hope but I know that April is an unpredictable month. A month famous for sunshine and heavy showers. As a child I remember racing a friend round the block on my bike before dashing back into his Dad's garage to dodge the next downpour, then racing round the block again.

April is unpredictable and so is our world. This time next year will we be in the EU or out? Will the refugee crisis be over or worse than ever? Will Norwich City be in the Premier League or the Championship? I know what I want but I have very little idea what will actually happen. All of that uncertainty can be frightening. I instinctively want certainty and security. Sadly, the world brings very little of either.

The same is true of the Church, at least to a point. Will our benefice continue to grow? Will more and more parishes see new people joining them? Will we continue to grow in faith? Again, I know what I want but I cannot know for certain, or at least the answer to these questions is out of my hands.

I see the same unpredictable world, a world that is not always certain or secure. I see all that the world is but I also know one who is greater than the uncertainty; one in whom I'm always secure. Some things though are certain.

What I do know for certain is that Jesus is Risen! I know that the Spirit is working in me and in these Norfolk churches. I see people coming to faith. I see people growing in faith. I know that the Holy Spirit is flowing through us. I can see that the Spirit is changing us. But I can't see the end result.

Thankfully, I don't need to. My job and your job is to follow where God directs, to a future still being created. This is the joy of the Easter hope. A confidence in the power and love of God. Confidence to know that whether the world brings sunshine or rain, I can agree with Julian of Norwich that "all shall be well and all shall be well, and all manner of things shall be well".

God bless, Nigel.

