

## Vicar's Letter

Dear friends,

I am revisiting a reflection I offered a few years back during the pandemic season of our lives. At the time, I spoke of sitting in the garden listening to the amazing dawn chorus and watching the sunrise that appears up over the shrubs and rooftops of Kings Lane. On one particular morning something else caught my eye. What stood out for me was – my washing line – all held high and adorned by props and pegs!



From that reflection, a friend bought me a little model of a clothes line and said how much the reflection helped her to gain perspective on a few things, which was really encouraging... Here's an updated version of what I wrote ...

'I thought back to the start of my 'spiritual journey' and the coming together of the earthly (world) and the spiritual (heavenly).

I had reached a point in my life when I realised that the way I was living wasn't working. I felt unfulfilled, unhappy, and life was chaotic –and as some of you know, using alcohol was the biggest part of my 'making things better' fix. Eventually though, there came moment of clarity – a moment of God's grace I call it now – and by following some life-changing steps to develop my spiritual life, things began to change.

The change wasn't so much because my physical surroundings and circumstances had changed (that came later) – but rather that my attitude to the world and my place in it began to change. There is a very wise saying that tells us; 'If you want to change the world, change yourself...' How true that is – and changing from the inside out is the key – right thought leads to right action and leads to the right result in our living...

So – where does the clothes line fit in with all that? Well, as a single parent of two young daughters and a full-time worker, life was full-on and I was a juggler of all the chores to be done, but what I wanted to do was to be able to leave the hustle and bustle of daily life so I could be concentrating on the 'spiritual' side of life.

It was in this busyness that I remember a moment when – hanging out the washing I realised that actually – I wasn't in two worlds – one for running a household and one for living a spiritual life. I was living in ONE world – there was no separation between the earthly and spiritual - everything I did was a prayer and could be offered to the world in a practical way with the best of intentions....

The point I was making is that deep within every one of us is the idea of God's loving grace, shown to us through Jesus and lived out in our lives through the power of the Holy Spirit, and that our earthly and heavenly lives feed into each other and we can draw from the wells of physical, emotional and spiritual experiences in order to live

in the best way we can for ourselves, our communities and our world. That's why so much of Jesus' teaching was done through parables – setting stories in everyday earthly life and work to show God's Kingdom-design for living in a way people could identify with – heads and hearts set in the clouds of heaven with hands and feet firmly on the ground of life indeed... 😊

As we enter into the summer season – I pray that whatever your summer plans are, the sun will shine warmly upon you and that you will find it a time of rest, relaxation and replenishment.

*Blessings and love, Jacqueline*