

COR Newsletter – 23 January 2008

Dear all,

Last Sunday in Sofia

We held our service in the catholic chapel in Oborishte as is now usual and then we all went to have a working lunch to plan for the future. This was a very productive meeting with lots of laughs and wonderful food which has already borne fruit. We now have some stability in Sofia and a platform from which to go forward. We welcomed a new Australian member - Chris, a female mining engineer - who is *already* working for us in spreading the word in Bulgaria by contacting various ex-pat publications. Who says the Church of England can't be pro-active?

and in Bucharest.....

John of course has trumped me in the pro-active stakes, by signing up a new family on their very first visit to our church who just happen to play in a Jazz/Blues band to also play at our Britannia Ball to accompany "Take Five" and the DJ. Now *that* is fast work!! I hear that 240Ron was taken at our Produce sale - Thank you to everyone who contributed.

Speaking of the Britannia Ball

Bookings are now coming in. If you want to reserve a place at this great forthcoming event please contact me at this email address or see me on Sunday. You all know the details by now and should have the poster as well. Don't miss any opportunities to spread the word!

OUR LENT COURSE starts next Monday Evening!!

As announced by John on Sunday I am starting an "Extended" Lent course which is being held every Monday Evening starting from next week in Church. Details as follows;

The course will take place on Monday evenings starting at 7pm and is open to everyone. It will last eight weeks. The first one will be on **Monday the 28th January** and the course will end on the Monday of Holy Week.

Each Monday we will look at each day of Jesus' last week in Jerusalem using Mark's gospel as our text. Mark is the only one that chronologically works through the last week in this way. The book we will be using is called "The last week". This is a brand new book to the U.K.(2008 - though first published in the USA in 2006) by eminent theologians Marcus Borg and John Crossan and is subtitled "What the gospels really teach about Jesus' final days in Jerusalem".

The full course is as follows;

Monday 28th Jan - Sunday: "When they were approaching Jerusalem" (Mark 11:1)

Monday 4th Feb. - Monday: ""On the following day" (Mark 11:12)

Monday 11th Feb - Tuesday: "In the morning" (Mark 11:20)

Monday 18th Feb - Wednesday: "It was two days before the Passover" (Mark 14:1)

Monday 25th Feb. - Thursday: "On the first day of unleavened bread" (Mark 14:12)

Monday 3rd March - Friday "As soon as it was morning" (Mark 15:1)

Monday 10th March - Saturday: "The Sabbath" (Mark 15:42, 16:1)

Monday 17th March - Sunday: "Very early on the first day of the week" (Mark 16: 2)

Tonight (Wednesday)

The week of prayer for Christian unity service is hosted by ourselves this evening at 5pm. If you can, come along.

My **Thought for the day** & **Prayer for the day** are one in the same this week. I found this following prayer at the very start of a little booklet called "A little treasury of prayers" by Walter C. Sutton and is prayer titled A Prayer *before* Praying. It is my thought for the day also because within this Prayer before praying it addresses a lot of issues that we must all have thought about at some time but try not to dwell on them because we then accuse ourselves of being unfaithful or of being bad Christians, but in my view honesty with God is the only option - He knows what you are *really* thinking anyway.

A Prayer before Praying

*If I'm just talking to myself -
and answering myself in my head in what I think is a pious way,
what a horrible delusion this business of praying is.
But if I really am talking to you God, not just to myself,
what an awesome, amazing, delightful and scary thing this is!*

But how can I tell if it's you?

*I could easily generate some of these ideas myself (even the good ones)
because of some unconscious need or desire.*

How can I know?

*What you have said to others in the past helps,
because I believe you will always be true to yourself -
a God "slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love"
who desires "mercy not sacrifice"
who offers life to all who will listen.
I can trust those understandings that seem to be answers to prayer, then,
if they move in the direction of life, and justice, and mercy and steadfast love.*

*I am also helped by others seeking your guidance.
Sharing our insights with each other,
we are less likely to wind up on some path chosen by our own concerns
rather than yours.*

*However, I do not trust alone in what is written,
or what others tell me.
My help is "from the Lord".
Unless your spirit leads my praying as well as my living,
I pray, and live, in vain.*

*I believe Lord. Help my unbelief.
Amen.*

Love and Peace

Martin