

COR Newsletter – 13 February 2008

Dear all,

Last Sunday

The first of Lent. After the service we sang "Happy Birthday" to **Vlad Adrian** and presented him with a box of chocolates.

We also read out a **commendation** presented to one of our most faithful benefactors. **Mr Irvin Dyer**. More of this in a second - something *even more* important happened for the Dyer household on Friday. Andreea gave birth to a daughter and they have named her Grace - very appropriate given the nature of the sermon today.

Congratulations to the entire family.

The commendation for Irvin Dyer was given in the U.S. Congress for his services to Romania, particularly in the field of combating drug addiction. This must be a very proud moment for the Dyer family and we in the Church of the Resurrection family are equally proud to know him!

Next Sunday

I will be celebrating with the Sofia congregation. HELLO SOFIA. I'm often aware that this email is so centred around Bucharest that Sofia must sometimes feel overlooked. It's not intentional, but with me only going there once a month we can all too easily forget our sister congregation. I am looking forward to seeing everyone again. Apparently I have an interview set up with a journalist after the service - pray for me now!

The Britannia Ball

is almost upon us! I look forward to seeing everyone who has booked on Friday evening. John Barker and myself went to a "tasting" on Monday so we already know that the food for the evening is going to be wonderful. Many grateful thanks in advance to the staff of the Intercontinental hotel and to the General Manager Jonathan Soper for his sponsorship, expertise and support. I know this is Lent....but let's look on Friday as a feast day!! (*In my diary it says this is a day we remember Bishop Sigfrid, Apostle of Sweden 1045.....that's handy!! - let's raise a few glasses to him tonight*)

Lent course

Speaking of Lent - our course continues through "the Last Week" and we have arrived at Tuesday. This is the longest day in Mark's gospel, covering almost three chapters, involving lots of confrontations with the authorities in the temple, the Greatest Commandment, and the "little apocalypse" of chapter 13. **Every Monday at 7pm in church** - all welcome.

Website.

You'd forgotten we have one hadn't you? Actually we are getting about 200 hits a month from separate computers. I had a meeting with our webmaster, Jo Kinberger to assess the site after six months operation. We have decided on some improvements - for example we discovered that in all the reams of information we provide we had omitted to tell people what time the service starts on a Sunday - and we will need to get our picture gallery up and running soon, so some photos from Friday night seemed

like the obvious place to start. I will also be including the address on this mail every week as a matter of course. <http://www.churchoftheresurrection.eu>

Thought for the day

A few years ago the church of England ran an Easter poster campaign that depicted Jesus in the iconic black and red Che Guevara pose beloved of students everywhere, and it carried the slogan "Meek and mild.....as if". It upset a lot of people at the time. Portraying Jesus as a long haired revolutionary got under a lot of people's skin, and yet when we read the gospels, especially Mark's gospel which we are currently doing in our Lent course, that is exactly the sort of figure who emerges (always assuming that Jesus did in fact have long hair!).

Jesus is not *apolitical*, he confronts the establishment (political and religious) head on. As Archbishop Desmond Tutu observed, "people who say that politics and religion don't mix must be reading a different Bible to me". Events like the Palm Sunday procession and the turning over of the tables in the temple didn't just happen spontaneously - when you study the text it becomes clear that these were pre-planned and calculated events guaranteed to confront and challenge the authorities. Keeping that sort of Jesus under wraps is what a lot of people prefer to do - preferring instead the image of Baby Jesus meek and mild, mainly because I think, that this Jesus is so unthreatening, to us, to our place in society and our wealth. Confronting the status quo when it is unjust and at fault, and perhaps putting our own position and income, and sometimes even our life in jeopardy isn't what many of us thought we were signing up to when we became Christians - so hidden from us is this other kind of Jesus. It is much easier and safer to gaze on that new born baby in a manger than to follow who that baby became when he became a man. Following *this* Jesus is a bit more scary and takes a lot more thought and effort.

Prayer for the day from myself and for myself (and I hope everyone else as well).

Heavenly Father

Open my eyes that I may see Jesus.

Help me to find the courage to follow Him more faithfully

Give me strength to overcome my inertia, my acquiescence with evil and injustice.

Make me passionate about the same things Jesus was passionate about.

Wake me from my spiritual sleep

*and make me alive to the real possibilities that you present to me,
through Jesus Christ our Lord.*

Amen.

Love and Peace

Martin