

THE DIOCESE OF TRURO

The Bishop of Truro, The Rt Revd Tim Thornton

Lis Escop, Truro, Cornwall. TR3 6QQ

Telephone: 01872 862657 • Fax 01872 862037 • Email: bishop@truro.anglican.org

27th July 2017

Pastoral Letter from the Bishop of Truro

"For we do not proclaim ourselves we proclaim Christ Jesus as Lord and ourselves as your slaves for Christ's sake. For it is the God who said; "Let light shine out of darkness," who has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." (2Corinthians chapter 4 vv. 5 and 6)

Yesterday morning I attended a Mass in the Abbaye de Landevennec in Brittany. I was there with Steve Wild and Perran Gay for a time of retreat and prayer. Many of you will know we have a close link with the Benedictine Abbey through St Guenole, who came from France to Cornwall bringing the Gospel message of God's love for all. For many years church leaders have taken pilgrims there to pray and talk together about our differences and our similarities and to pray for unity.

Every day they celebrate the Mass at 11.15 a.m. they will do so again today. Of course their prayers like ours will go out to the community in Rouen grieving over the horrific attack that took place yesterday.

We condemn violence wherever it happens and the wicked nature of this latest atrocity is shocking. I am sure we will all be praying for our colleagues in the Roman Catholic Church this week. I have sent a message of support to Bishop Mark (the Roman Catholic Bishop of Plymouth) who is with so many others at the World Youth Day in Poland.

No doubt you will also be concerned to ensure the right steps are taken for us to be alert and aware of the safety of all who attend our churches as I know we always are. There has been some advice circulated to churches which you can read at these links.

<http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/counter-terrorism-protective-security-advice-for-places-of-worship>

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/places-of-worship-security-funding-scheme>

I believe our first task is to continue to witness to the message of the Gospel which is, as we know, good news for all.

At a time when there is understandable anxiety and real fear on the part of many there is a tendency to stand aback from others and to build metaphorical walls between us. This is not the Christian way. At this time we need to ensure we continue to extend hospitality to others and to work hard to ensure we listen to all members of our community.

Our message is one that is difficult for many to understand and accept but it is one that claims God loves us all and wants us to keep working together and keep listening to each other and find ways to create community. At a time such as this more than ever our prayer should be for peace and for justice right

around God's world and for the ability to keep listening to the Gospel message that the light will shine out of the darkness.

A prayer for unity which has been used over the years by the Companions of St Guenole

O God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, we affirm our faith in you as the Holy One, and our conviction that you have called us to witness to the perfect unity of your love, to continue in the work of reconciliation, and to reveal you to the world. Enable us to seek the peace and unity which is your will. Amen.

Feel free to use this letter as you think right for your circumstances.

Yours

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'b. A. R.', written in a cursive style.