

RECTOR'S PINT

At the beginning of September, I attended a small reunion of students from the sixth form College in Henley which I attended from 1976 - 1978. There were only ten of us, together with spouses and partners. I was very nervous about going, as I was rather on the fringe of things as a student, and I was rather thrown when a man I vividly remembered said to me "Simon Cronk, I have to confess I only half remember you". I was a bit flustered and attempted to remind him that we had in fact shared a group holiday together in Dawlish, where one of our number was then living. He had absolutely no memory of ever being in Dawlish! I really wish I had the presence of mind and been quick witted enough to ask "which half do you remember?" That was one of those golden opportunities which I think will probably never come again.

I did wince a bit at being told I was 'half remembered' but I went on to have a very happy afternoon, as we all did, with the hope that we will do it again. However, this did make me reflect on the value we put on being known and remembered. For some, this is crucial to their lives as they strive to leave a legacy, for good or ill, that will never be forgotten. For most of us, the reality is that in a relatively short period after we die, within a generation or two, we will have been forgotten. But there is another dimension to this which we do not see. As a Christian I believe that one of the fundamental realities of our faith is that we are known by God. In Isaiah 49:16 we read "Behold, I have engraved you on the palms of my hands". And in John 10:28 we read "I gave them eternal life, and they will never perish, and no one will snatch them out of my hand". What is the true nature of our identity and security? Is it that we are remembered after 45 years by someone we never really knew in the first place, or that we are known by God? I know which one gets my vote.

Remembering will be at the centre of a special service we are having at 4.00pm St Mary's Great Milton on Sunday 5th November a service of Commemoration and Thanksgiving for the Departed, so a bit of advance notice for people to put in their diaries. This will be for anyone who wants to remember family and friends 'whom we love but see no longer'. We will hear names read and there will be an opportunity to light a candle of remembrance. Also, as we reflect on our own mortality, we will remember that in God's eyes we are fully and completely remembered.

Simon

Service of Commemoration and Thanksgiving for the departed.

St Mary's Church Great Milton

Sunday 5 November 4.00 pm

Refreshments will be served after the service.