



*Notes to help you plan your resolutions and the one or two priorities that will become part of your Way of Living.*

- ◇ Your gift for talking about Jesus, with/out words
- ◇ The best way to let the Bible talk to you

## PENTECOST

### Using the gifts of the Spirit in God's Mission

It's very interesting that when the great day of Pentecost came, with tongues of flames and a rushing wind, what happened was that people started to talk.

There is, of course, the added dimension that they understood each other.

But essentially, the great gift to the new Israel, the Church, in order to proclaim the good news of new life, was the ability to make people talk.

In the power of the Holy Spirit, God has given you some gift that is unique. It is a gift for you to talk about yourself, or to use in such a way as others will talk about it for you and because of you.

Some of the most powerful communicators don't actually have much to say about themselves. It's odd how shy an actor can be, or a musician, or a novelist. But their God-given gifts communicate powerfully in other ways.

This final section of your Rule of Life looks at your gifts and how you can use them for communicating the gospel of Jesus Christ. You might be one of those people who does communicate faith, but not by talking. You can do it in other ways. That's fine.

What is it that you do? How will you do it as part of your *Way of Living* so that Jesus Christ is proclaimed by others who will do the talking?

Bishop Richard has made no secret of the fact that he joined his bikers club so they would have something to talk about when they discovered he is a Christian and an ordained minister of the Church of England.

That is a good example, finally, of attention to your context. God may have given you gifts for being in a context where you are the only Christian. On a ship, down a mine, in an office are all contexts where I have met a lone, individual Christian who chooses to witness to Jesus Christ in that place.

The support of Christians at church is a vital element in sustaining that witness. How much do you know about what support other Christians in your church need in their daily life? And if you are not called to that ministry, you might be called to the ministry of prayer for that person or those people.

Talking about your gift of the Holy Spirit, or listening to others talking about theirs, might prompt you to want to explore your faith more deeply. There are many new ways of doing that in the diocese; you might want to include an exploration of that now, or when you review your *Way of Living* in a year or two.

Finally, Jesus tells us that the Holy Spirit will remind us of his words (John 14.26).

As the risen Jesus walks with the two disciples to Emmaus, they talk. When eventually they recognise Jesus in the breaking of bread, they comment, “were not our hearts burning within us while he was talking to us on the road, while he was opening the scriptures to us?” (Luke 24.32).

The Holy Spirit also burns within us as we are reminded of the words of Jesus who opens the scriptures to us, enabling us to understand the old covenant in the light of the new covenant sealed with his death and resurrection.

If we are to talk with others about our faith, we also need to have hearts that are set on fire by the Holy Spirit through the reading, and re-reading, of the holy scriptures in New and Old Testaments.

How will you include this in your *Way of Living*?

1. Some of it you do already, in hearing the Bible read in church. Could you prepare for that more carefully - reading the lessons before you hear them in church, re-reading them afterwards?
2. There are Apps and study guides that will help you with discovering more about the Bible. Look up the material that was published for the Year of the Bible.
3. Did you join a home group for Bible study? If there isn't one, might you suggest it as a Year of Prayer project?
4. What time and place could you set aside for your own, devout pondering on the holy scriptures? (I sometimes see people doing this on the train; it is great witness!)