

Thought for the Day – Thursday 25th June 2020

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I know I am not alone when I say that I have been thinking a lot about change recently. Maureen mentioned this in her sermon on Sunday when she said: 'choosing to serve Jesus and do the work of his kingdom changes us.' Don and Jenny spoke of change in their Thought for the Day last week and the fact that it can be both good and bad.

Two other words that have popped into my mind several times over the past few weeks are 'adapt' and 'adaptation'.

I never cease to be awestruck by the complexity of creation when teaching 11-year-olds about how different species have adapted to their changing environment over thousands or millions of years, one example being the peppered moths who adapted and changed colour depending on where they lived. Darker moths became more common in cities where trees were covered in soot during the Industrial Revolution, whereas lighter coloured moths favoured the lichen-covered trees of the countryside.

Every species on Earth has the ability to adapt and grow within its environment, some of which may result in permanent changes or, indeed, new species.

As a primary school teacher, I have been amazed and uplifted by the examples of adaptation I have witnessed in the past few weeks, particularly from our children. They have quickly adapted to new classroom layouts, different routines, separation from friends, extra cleaning and hand-washing, and working in a completely different way. They have demonstrated resilience and perseverance, generally with a smile on their faces and an eagerness to be back at school. However, this is only the story for some of the children – others are continuing to adapt by organising their time at home, seeing their parents as teachers, attending 'Zoom' lessons and trying to stay motivated whilst separated from their peers.

One of the activities that I always ask my 11-year-olds to do is to consider how human beings may evolve in the future. Many of them think about physical adaptations such as webbed feet, gills and fins due to the rise in sea levels, but what about spiritual or personality adaptations?

All of us have had to adapt in so many ways over the past few months and this takes lots of perseverance and resilience. Some may be welcome adaptations for the better, some not so much. We have seen many pictures and stories

about people adapting their lives to help others, perhaps behaving in ways that they never dreamed they would have done before this crisis began. Can we, as a species, turn these positive adaptations into a spiritual evolution?

With God's help we can. We are called to serve Jesus, to listen to the will of God and accept the Holy Spirit in our hearts.

In the Message, Paul's words in Romans 12:2 are illustrated as follows:

Don't become so well-adjusted to your culture that you fit into it without even thinking. Instead, fix your attention on God. You'll be changed from the inside out. Readily recognise what he wants from you, and quickly respond to it. Unlike the culture around you, always dragging you down to its level of immaturity, God brings the best out of you, develops well-formed maturity in you.

We can adapt for the future, however uncertain it may seem, and we can rejoice in the glimpses of God's work within people across the world.

Let us pray:

Dear Lord,

We thank you that you have given us the strength and resilience to adapt to new and sometimes uncertain circumstances.

May you continue to hold us all in your protective hands and help us to grow in your spiritual love.

Help us to share the good news of your everlasting grace to those we meet.

Amen.

CMP 389 – Jesus, You are changing me

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=64OBMT2mrKU>

Jesus, You are changing me,

By Your Spirit You're making me like You;

Jesus, You're transforming me,

That Your loveliness may be seen in all I do.

You are the potter and I am the clay,

Help me to be willing to let You have Your way.

Jesus, You are changing me

As I let You reign supreme within my heart.