

Ephesians 6.21-24

Undying Love

Amington Parish Church

Easter Sunday 12 April 2020

Ephesians: that was then, this is now [13]

Undying love

A young man was about to marry the love of his life.

‘Son,’ his father said, ‘Before you get married I must explain to you about the importance of the three rings.’

‘The first ring is your fiancée’s engagement ring – it tells her of your undying love for her.’

The son smiled as he remembered how he felt when he proposed all those months before.

‘The second ring is your wedding ring – it tells of your intent to be faithful to your wife for the rest of your life.’

The son smiled as he thought about the wonderful wedding day he was about to enjoy. ‘What about the third ring?’ he asked.

‘Ah,’ said his father, ‘That’s the suffering.’

Life out of death

Welcome to the vicarage garden.

As you can see, we've had some work done! This was quite the jungle a couple of weeks ago.

No – the diocese doesn't have permission to build a new vicarage yet, but they decided to clear it before it got even more overgrown. Whether there is a house on here by next summer, or it's part of our garden again – it needed to be cleared before it got any worse.

As you can see, it's pretty apocalyptic right now. It's almost completely dead – nothing left but the worms.

And this tree.

I asked Bruce and Judith if they had a sapling they could give me, to plant in the vicarage garden as an Easter tree – a sign of the life God promises, even through the death and pain of 2020.

You see, the devastation of this garden is much like I feel given all that's going on right now, and I imagine many of you feel the same. It's not right, me filming a sermon for you to watch at home on Easter morning, instead of us all celebrating Easter together in the church building.

But if Easter means anything – and it means *everything* – it is this: Jesus wins, death is not the end.

That was then *gesture round the garden*: on Good Friday and Holy Saturday, death was the final word.

But on Easter Sunday, death no longer has the victory because Jesus has conquered the grave: *gesture to the tree* **this is now**.

Jesus – *wins*.

He alone loves us with an **undying love**, because he alone has conquered death: only his love is stronger than death.

I wonder what you will plant in the brokenness of your life this Easter?