

## Celebrating Life

In the spectrum of emotions, we make decisions. Sometimes with much thought over a long time. Others taken with seconds to spare. We share laughter. We share tears. In the patterns of making our choices Christ adds something more. We are called to illuminate the world in order to bring life to others.

**You are the light of the world** [Matthew 5:14a]

As a student nurse one of my flat mates lived about 20miles away. She would often go home for her days off. One evening I received a call from her. Panic stations. Due to the dense fog her father refused to drive her back and she was on an early the next day. There I am with another flat mate, driving in this dense fog.

So dense we could not even see the front of the car. The journey was spent crawling along with our heads hanging out of the window. The cry "I can't see the hedge," warned me I was on the wrong side of the road. Anyone following would also be zig zagging their way.



As for those times I am following the car in front, I admit to complaining; "come on, you can go faster than that."

Following is easier than being in the lead.

Thirty three years ago people could save tokens from a newspaper. These allowed day trips to France. Heavily pregnant with a three- year son, our trip was full of fun and laughter. When the newspaper reran the offer we jumped at the chance. This time we were taking Peter's parents. As before, the form gave three port choices + travel times. Last trip was to Calais, this time somewhere different. Our travel times were also different due to accommodating our nine week old daughter. At the time we were disappointed not to get our first choice. Back to Calais we went.

We arrived home very late. As we put the children to bed Peter's parents called. "Put the 10pm news on".

6<sup>th</sup> March 1987. The ferry leaving port of Zeeburge had capsized 90 seconds into the journey. Stories of survival spoke of families separated, no sight of loved ones. A mother holding her baby in her teeth to keep both hands free to cling onto life. Had we been given our first choice then I could have been that

mother. Praying my husband was hanging onto our son just as I held fast to our daughter. Somewhere in all the chaos Peter's parents would have been left to their own fate.

Every year on the 4<sup>th</sup> February, I take time out to celebrate the life God has given me. The bond of love and life between marriage and baptism.

The life of marriage. The vows spoken in the presence of God. For better, for worse, for richer, for poorer, in sickness and in health, to love and to cherish till death us do part, according to God's holy law. An added flavour was Peter's great uncle officiated.

The life of Baptism. Having married us it was important to me he baptise our son. The event was the gossip of my two sisters. What would I dress our son in? As I walked down the church path their faces were a picture. I had dressed him in a long christening robe with bonnet.

Great Uncle was already elderly when he married us. I was really worried he would not be able to baptise our daughter. The thought filled me with dread. She couldn't be left out. Baptise her he did. Dressed in the same Christening robe and bonnet as her brother.

Family united in love through promises made before God. Added spice was my choice to make their christening robe from my wedding dress.

43 years ago. 4.45pm. The day before Lent 1. It is dark and very wet. I know, it was February and late in the day. But I wanted the church filled with flowers and the first Saturday after Easter was 1<sup>st</sup> April. 4<sup>th</sup> February a wise choice.

Today I celebrate life through choices made. Grateful it is Christ's light that guides me. A life trusting this light seen and unseen brings peace.

I invite you to join with me in saying;



Thank you, Christ for always being ahead, especially in choices.

Thank you for this life.