

# THOUGHTS ON LIFE AND FAITH – May 2018

By the time you read this I expect that the press will be awash with snippets of information, comments and “insider” perspectives about the wedding of Prince Harry and Meghan Markle and it will be only the cynical and the churlish who would fail to wish them well as they enter their marriage and to hope, as we would for all others who marry, that they come to know the blessing of a long and happy life together.

This year for Christians, because of the date of Easter, the day following the royal wedding May 20<sup>th</sup>, marks the Feast of Pentecost. In my youth this was known as Whit Sunday and was chiefly important to me as a child because it was the day on which girls could expect to have a new, frequently our only new, frock of the year.

The day of course is of much greater significance than any new frock. It marks the day, when devastated by the Crucifixion of their beloved Lord, encouraged by his Resurrection, mourning his departure from earth in the Ascension, the group of disciples who after the crucifixion locked themselves away, afraid to venture outside, uncertain of what they would do without him, who, even after the Ascension and the promise made to them by Jesus, kept themselves with likeminded believers, choosing Matthias to replace Judas were filled with that promised Holy Spirit and were emboldened to go out with their message to the world that Jesus is alive and with us always. (Acts 1 and 2) This witness cost many of them their lives but they endured torture and imprisonment and went confidently to their deaths, secure in their belief This continues to be true today though not, for most of us here in the West, in such dramatic outcomes. Indifference and scepticism, even ridicule are what we face but others elsewhere empowered by the Holy Spirit still die for their belief in their Risen Lord.

Enjoy watching the wedding but rejoice in Pentecost. and the power of the Holy Spirit.

Beth Smith Locally Authorised Preacher-Tenpenny Villages Benefice