

St James News: Thought for the day – Monday 5th October 2020

Kindness and Joy – Rev John Marshall

Susan Calman Sunnyside Up Kindness and Joy

I am still reading Susan Calman's book

She says "It is about two of the best things in the world: kindness and joy. And I am probably the grumpiest woman in the world."

Fundamentally kindness is the quality of being friendly and generous. Considerate even."

"For me the essence of kindness is where it stems from; what the intention behind the kind act is."

Susan Calman is a trained lawyer and tries to define kindness.

"Apart from some strict liability offences, in order to be convicted of a crime you have to have both the mens rea and the actus reus. The actus reus is the actual doing of something, for example in a kind act, it would be the giving of a present or picking up a wallet that you've found in the street. The mens rea is the mental element of a crime. The direct intention of doing something. Kindness is in some way simply the reversal of a criminal act. Have you done something that's had a positive impact on someone and did you mean to do it, then you have done something kind."

Jesus responding to a lawyer told the story of the Good Samaritan. Paul tells us of the fruit of the Spirit in Galatians 5.22,23 "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, and self-control. James writes about kind actions in chapter 2.14-17.

Susan says "one of the reasons I love joy is that the thing that gives you that feeling is different for everyone."

The Psalmist says "You have made known to me the path of life, you will fill me with joy in your presence, with eternal pleasure at your right hand." Psalm 16.11.