

Thought for the Day 15th June 2020 from Richard Barton (All Hallows)

Luke 12.1-12

In this passage we hear from Jesus that God cares very much for us as humans. “Even the hairs on your head are counted” “Don’t be afraid, you are worth more than many sparrows”

The humble house sparrow, this supposedly common, non-entity of a bird, ignored by the general public and birdwatchers alike, is in fact on the International Union for Conservation of Nature’s UK Red List of Threatened Species and UK numbers have declined by as much as 60% in urban and suburban areas since 1976. But should we care? Jesus tells us – you are of more value than many sparrows.

The very first chapter of the very first book of the Old Testament is often blamed for our attitudes towards Gods creation “now we will make human beings; they will have power over the fish the birds and all animals.” It is this power, or dominion that has led to an attitude in past centuries that humans have a right to exploit the natural environment, and exploit it we did. In more recent times, we have realised more that this was a mistake and we need to live more in harmony with Gods creation. However, the higher value humans assume, with their associated needs and interests, often means that the damages to this planet already made are not made good, and often are exacerbated. This has culminated in our realisation that we are close to irrevocably damaging the very atmosphere of the earth leading to the risk of catastrophic climate change.

But Jesus is telling us that God does not just care for us, God cares for the minutiae of creation, “Are not five sparrows sold for two pennies? Yet not one of them is forgotten in God’s sight.”

We are loved, the numbers of hairs on your head are known to God. But we are loved as part of an amazing creation and God will note every sparrow that does not thrive, as well our stewardship of Gods world.

It is perhaps only when we have accepted Gods love through Christ that we can truly know what is to share Gods glory in the delight of this creation.