**3 Small Steps: Consider the Lilies**

As many Parish magazines and reflections will be full of articles on the joys of spring – daffodils, new-born lambs and general signs of new life - what did Jesus have to say as He pointed out the creation He saw around Him?

In Matthew 6 from verse 28, Jesus draws our attention to the lilies of the field and asks us to consider them when thinking about how we will manage to get by and our 3 small steps come from these reflections.

**1. Give from what you already have.** (“how they grow”)

On an autumnal edition of Gardener’s World, Monty Don advised that it was not necessary to add feed or fertiliser when potting our springtime bulbs as everything they need to grow and flower is already contained within the bulb. Similarly, the church already has everything it needs to grow and flourish. The challenge comes in willingly releasing what we have, financially, materially and spiritually in order for that promised flourishing to take place. A bulb cannot choose to hold back its flowers as God has pre-ordained that it should give out what it has stored up, creating a wonderful display for our pleasure. Will you give out what you have stored up in your life to bring pleasure and glory to God?

**2. Don’t wear yourself out.** (“they neither toil nor spin”)

So much effort goes in to raising funds, putting on events and literally chasing after money to keep heads above water, yet here we have the lilies, which are not making any effort at all, even to stay alive! While we sometimes need to seek funding help for our larger projects, our day-to-day needs should be met by following God’s instructions. Jesus gently reminds us that God is our creator, provider and sustainer and, if we will only do things His way and put Him FIRST, He will prove to be our sufficiency. The mention of Solomon shows us that the best efforts of the greatest men are nothing in comparison to what God can do. So let’s trust in Him and His ability instead of in ourselves.

**3. Increase your faith.** (“will He not much more clothe you?”)

What is your view of God? As the writer of Hebrews tells us we need to keep our eyes firmly fixed on Jesus. When we do so we are reminded of how much He loves us, so much so that He gave up His very life. We need to have an understanding of this unconditional, sacrificial love in order to believe that He really does care about our daily needs. Jesus has already pointed to the birds and now He points to the grasses. You have to realise how much you are worth to Jesus. When you do, you will have no trouble responding to His overwhelmingly generous gifts to you by working out a generous lifestyle of your own.