

Towards the end of May and into June the whole of the countryside seems to come fully into life and blossom. How blessed we are to live in such a beautiful area of the country.

This June sees our Open Gardens event in Gosmore and St Ippolyts, you will find lots more details about it in this magazine. Do come along and visit the gardens, you can usually find something new you haven't seen before, and maybe an idea you can take home with you and think about doing something similar in your own garden.

I'm pleased to say my vegetable patch is looking good and I look forward to reaping the benefits of the digging, sowing and staking.

Some of the vegetables we grow reward us with their fruit/harvest in a very short time, others we have to be patient with and wait a year or longer, if we are planting fruit trees for example.

In much the same way we could look at the Christian message we sow in peoples hearts, sometimes we reap the benefit in a short time, when people come forward for confirmation or volunteer to help at fundraising events, committees or services, while others might be more like the parsnips or fruit trees, keeping us waiting for their fruit and harvest, their offerings to God.

But as any gardener will know all the while a plant is growing it needs tender loving care and always there is hope for a harvest as long as the plant has life in it. And even when the plant seems to fail and produce no crop, or succumb to the greenfly attack, it still has its use in the compost heap which when the time is right produces food, or inspiration of sorts, for other living things.

I hope you can see where I am leading..... as each of us grow on our Christian journey through life we need the tender loving care of our Master gardener, and God, indeed, always has hope for us, that there is some particular job he has in mind for us where we will blossom, flourish and fruit and produce a harvest for the Kingdom.

And if I can take delight in a newly planted up garden with all the future harvests in store, I feel pretty sure that God delights in us, his plantings, whether we are quick growing, laden with fruit or slightly hidden from view at different times of the year.

In the book of Isaiah we read 'They will be called oaks of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, to display his glory'. So whether you are struggling to put out roots at the moment, looking for nourishment, or whether you feel you've been growing for many years producing rich pickings, just remember if we all display God's glory, what a wonderful open garden we have to offer those who come into our company.

Happy growing.

Reverend Ann – 'growing happy'