

## Monthly Letter, October 2020

From the Bishop of Ramsbury, Andrew Rumsey



### Though the grass may wither

The midst of autumn: Harvest is past, yet the lawn's still growing. For such a noisy task, I have always found mowing the grass an ideal aid to reflection. This is partly because doing so brings me close to my late father, with whom I shared mowing duties at home. The smell of four-star slugging into an old Mountfield, its snarling start-up (after several sweaty tugs on the recoil cord) and a gardening jacket itched with clippings: these things ground me, somehow.

Our years, we are reminded by the Psalmist, 'fade away suddenly like the grass. In the morning it is green and groweth up, but in the evening it is cut down, dried up and withered'. I have read these lines – with their evergreen hook, "the days of our age are threescore years and ten" - at untold funerals over the years, placing the seasons of life into the hands of our creator. And there is comfort indeed in knowing the Lord's great faithfulness in all things.

A simple task, close to the soil, is a great opportunity to pray. The physical exercise keeps us just occupied enough to divert the usual distractions, leaving the mind and heart free to ascend a little. Being with God at such times – in quiet awareness of his company, or in ordinary conversation - is a settling thing and I commend it to you, while the weeks allow us still to be outside. Thus grounded, we shall be able to face whatever the winter brings.

*+Andrew Ramsbury*