

## Clergy Letter – April 2018

### Glory in Surrender

Steve Jones

Recently I was in a local Garden Centre looking at some Gladioli bulbs. I am not much of a gardener, but the basic principles of growing those bulbs to maturity made me think a lot about a passage we find in John 12, where the action is happening in the days before Jesus' arrest and trial. In this section of John's Gospel, Jesus tells those following Him that the time has come for the Son of Man to be *glorified*. I find that strange? Didn't Jesus know that He was about to be crucified, not glorified? Why didn't He say that the time had come for the Son of man to be *crucified*? For this profound reason – that Jesus knew and teaches us that there is glory on the other side of self-surrender. He saw through the horrors of Good Friday to the exaltation of Easter Sunday. Jesus explains how that principle applies to us by picturing a seed falling to the ground and dying. He says that it is only by dying that the seed can produce a harvest of many times its own size. He is talking about Himself, of course, but He is also talking about you and me. When I looked at the Gladioli bulbs I realized that, if they could talk, they would probably wish to stay in the warmth and light of the Garden Centre, rather than being pushed into dark, damp, cold earth. But it is only in their burial in the ground that they will split apart and produce something even more beautiful than they already are. They have to go into the ground. And in Christ, that is true of us also. St. Paul explains in Romans that if we are willingly buried with Christ, we can be raised with Him also. If we allow ourselves to be buried by our self-surrender, we will be resurrected on the other side as something much more beautiful than we are now. So, as we experience Holy Week, how do we let Christ plant us in the ground of our own spiritual transformation? Very simply, by surrendering to Christ our will, our hopes and dreams for the future, and copying Jesus in praying to the Father, 'Not My will, but Thy will be done!'