

Sermon Summary
10th after Pentecost
21st August 2011

- In Romans 12:1-8 , Paul takes us to the next stage which follows on from his contention that we need a response to God which matches that of Judaism.
- He describes this using the language of “sacrifice”. He asks us to discern what God wants us to do.
- He describes this by using the language of “grace”, and this is one of those words which may side-track us. It’s a church-y word and we go through the motions of thinking we know what it means. But what is grace? Its not, as Billy Connolly once described it, like waves of a custard-y yellow gloop that wash over us. Nor is it something that drops from heaven.
- We can think more positively about what grace is by thinking about every police procedural or detective show that we may enjoy. I like “Taggart” and I don’t need subtitles....
- The detective in solving the crime looks for three things: means, motives and opportunity.
- Grace firstly means the abilities that God has given to us
- Motives are the things we are good at...really good at. Not necessarily the things that we THINK we are good at. I might think I’m good at DIY, but, trust me, you would not want me to renovate your house....
- Opportunity: the place where God has put us, and the potential that it offers to us.
- This may well remind us of what is happening in the Diocesan Ministering Communities in Mission. It echoes exactly this reading of Romans 12. We look for the means, motive and opportunities we have to respond to God’s love for us in the gift of ourselves, our abilities and so on, for His work.
- We are lucky, this process has happened in this parish over the years. It’s why we have Retired Friends, MU, Men’s group and craft; because people have applied their gifts to the needs of the community around us. It is happening again in mainly music.
- It’s a process that will always need to go on in the life of this parish in the years ahead if we are to be faithful in our response to God.

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