

Free Press

freepressseries.co.uk

Thought for the weak



with the Rev Preben Andersen

WHENEVER I can, on a Friday night, I join the Caldicot Street Warmers for prayer at 7pm before we open the doors to the youths hanging about, inviting them to come and enjoy a free cup of chocolate, a biscuit and a chat. No pressure. And I am very aware that at the same time that Street Warmers prepare to meet the kids precisely where they are, the street pastors prepare for a very long evening and night with them, often at the very sharp end of things.

What I often experience with the 'Warmers' are the many golden opportunities to engage with and learn from our young people and to feel the appreciation they show in knowing that Churches Together love them and want them to enjoy the free things of life.

I guess this thought will be in the paper in the run-up to Easter when we remember the greatest gift of all, namely that of life eternal. Simply and uniquely because of what God did and continues to do through Jesus. No-one is beyond the love and care of God as expressed by those who invite Him into their hearts and want to share with others, and so often this happens at Street Warmers and in many other places.

Life is hard and lonely for many, the young certainly not protected.

However, the love and the warmth and the gratitude from the young people we try to serve more than compensate for any physical discomfort of our own. How we wish we could make things warmer for them, though, but spring draws nearer with a new spring in its step.

I finish with this illustration of a young man who came up to the 'Warmers' one frosty Friday night and saw one of the many pairs of gloves kindly donated by someone for those in need.

The lad looked at his own gloves and said: "Is it OK if I swop, these look far more comfortable than mine."

And of course it was. And he did not walk away with two pairs, only one, a free gift from someone who cared for him, leaving behind his own pair for someone who had none.

How is that for warmth on a chilly night?

I rest my case.