

Spring is a time of new life, a time of growth. There are so many stories about what might happen during springtime, both in history and in folklore. I remember travelling through the English countryside in springtime, noticing once again the signs of new life: new lambs and new grass, blossoms and spring flowers.

Here in Aotearoa New Zealand, six months after spring in England, or indeed six months before it, we are just now coming to celebrate springtime. Yet we come to it, not as those who followed traditional, superstitious beliefs but as those who have some understanding, however slight, of the Lord God Almighty, the Creator of the World, who has made all that was, is and will be.

We celebrate the coming of spring, for it is not only something that is good to enjoy, but it is a promise of much that is significant to us in other ways: as we look at the blossoms on the trees, we see the promise of the fruit of the harvest, which will become food for us, either directly or through sale. We look at the lambs and the calves in the same way. The young grain will become wheat, which can be made into bread or many other good things. As we grow wheat, it can become bread, and here in Hawkes Bay we also have vines, which grow into grapes. We then get wine from this, and I am sure that it is no accident that our Lord celebrated at the last supper with two simple elements which grow easily in many different places.

Bread is one of our most important foodstuffs, present in some form in almost every culture on earth, and acknowledge by many of us in other ways: when we talk of bread or dough, we're not always talking about things to eat, but sometimes about money. Doesn't that tell us how important we see bread as being.

In our Gospel reading, we have heard about Solomon, the wealthiest man who ever lived, wealthier in his days than the Rothschilds or the Rockefellers, or the Sultan of Brunei or Bill Gates, yet there is one important thing about him: although he was very well dressed indeed, he wasn't as well decked out as the lilies of the field.

We celebrate at springtime, but for all of us, there might be worries as we look at the seasons turning around once more. Yet Christ is warning us: isn't life more than food and the body more than clothing?

The birds of the air don't store away in barns, but God feeds them. We're much more valuable than they are!

God makes the colour of the fields and the skies, which will pass away in next to no time: how much more He will give us than them!

So when it comes to springtime, summertime or any other time, we must always come back to the instruction given us by Christ himself: do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own.

So as we go out into the springtime, let us rejoice with God's creatures at the seasons, but let's take each day as it comes, celebrating the new life in the earth, and our life in Christ Jesus, the Saviour and Redeemer of us all.