

# The United Kingdom and the World Around Us

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Holy Week this year has become fuller than usual, more crowded than expected. The religious significance means much to me; this article is not a pulpit so please forgive me for concentrating mainly on secular issues.

On Saturday, Col. Mark Turner and I walked in Rustington to the Mosquito Memorial in Chaucer Avenue. The crew of two and three residents sadly died when in February 1945 the aircraft MM550 from Ford suffered from a control problem or engine failure before crashing on bungalows. After Easter, we could nominate the memorial for listing and for protection on the National List?

Here is a paragraph from the History Net article on the Miraculous Mosquito: 'Hermann Göring was another Mosquito fan. "In 1940 I could fly as far as Glasgow in most of my aircraft, but not now!" he famously said. "It makes me furious when I see the Mosquito. I turn green and yellow with envy. The British, who can afford aluminum better than we can, knock together a beautiful wooden aircraft that every piano factory over there is building....They have the geniuses and we have the nincompoops.'"

To change from war to St Matthews' church in Tarring road, I join in paying tribute to the Parisian Fire Brigade chaplain Father Jean-Marc Fournier who in 2004 served as an army chaplain. Four years ago in 2015 he entered the Bataclan concert hall where 90 people died in a terror attack. He helped the wounded; when the killing ended he prayed for the dead. He said he remembered those that were embraced by people who sacrificed themselves to try to save those whom they loved.

At Notre Dame he saved precious objects as police and fire officers in a human chain removed other valuable artefacts. I value his comment that he did not know what a chaplain is for though he noticed that when he is not there, things go less well.

I enjoyed the Fair at St Michael's church on Hayling Rise before coming to St Matthews where the team led by Canon Paul Taylor shared The Great Easter Adventure, the free community event, with a church full of children and adults. It was one of the greatest gathering I have witnessed during my service as a local MP. Home visits made it not possible to join the Plastic Free Worthing meeting.

Parliament has a few days of rest. In Parliament Square I exchanged polite words with some protestors who have taken on themselves the responsibility to claim they have no choice: they believe they have to disrupt the city. Last month they planned to blockade the port of Dover to show our dependence on imports and exports.

I declare gently and firmly that the RiseUp! Group, now evolved to Extinction Rebellion, should not choose to interfere so much in the ordinary lives of ordinary people. I explained that in a blocked street nearby there was a jammed blue light emergency ambulance, close to a coach with disabled children having a trip of a lifetime disrupted by groups who are not accountable, who have not been elected and who, I guess, would like everyone to be organic farmers in Wales.

The oddest, perhaps sensible, action by the founders was to form a limited liability company to protect their own assets.

The United Kingdom and the world around us? The retiring EU Commission president Jean Claude Juncker in his retirement speech said there will never be a United States of Europe. He and I served as employment ministers in the 1980s: then I explained that good ideas and effective practices could be adopted willingly, not imposed.