

## *Easter Day (2014)*

We have become accustomed to living in a world in which there is the facility of global and almost immediate communication. Mobile phones are ubiquitous; sophisticated navigation systems are commonplace even in family cars; we can access live TV news bulletins updating us on events around the world twenty four hours a day.

All of this is possible only because of the positioning of satellites above the earth. The older ones among us will remember what excitement there was at the launch and orbiting of the very first of these communications satellites, 'Telstar'. A tune was composed in celebration and a recording of it became a popular purchase at the music shops.

We may have forgotten, or perhaps never knew, that the technology that made the placing of such satellites possible was primarily the work of a German scientist, Wernher von Braun. He had played a key role in the design and manufacture of the **destructive** V1 and V2 rockets deployed against us towards the end of the Second World War.

Subsequently, in peacetime, he was able to bring his scientific know-how to bear in a **constructive** way that led, in due course, to the building of rockets powerful enough to travel beyond the earth's atmosphere and to carry satellites that could circumnavigate the globe. This achievement has made our modern communications possible.

Before he died Von Braun gave his personal view or testimony concerning life after death:

*I think that science has a real surprise for the sceptics... Nothing in nature, not even the tiniest particle, can disappear without a trace. Nature does not know extinction. All it knows is transformation... Everything science has taught me – and continues to teach me – strengthens my belief in the continuity of our personal existence after death.*

C S Lewis, the English author and apologist for Christianity wrote in one of his many books:

*I find deep in myself a desire that no experience in this world can satisfy. The most probable explanation is that I was made for another world.*

It seems then that both our minds and our hearts draw us into a belief in life beyond death, a belief (moreover) that is **reasonable**.

Of course, this faith finds its firmest foundation in the person of Jesus whose rising from death to a new and fuller life we celebrate today.

His living presence, witnessed by many of his first disciples, we can read about in the Gospels and elsewhere in the books of the New Testament. But His resurrection has also been attested to by countless numbers of people down the centuries since whose personal lives have been transformed by the touch and inspiration of His continuing life and love.

Today we should open our hearts and minds again to Jesus' real presence and power, and we should ask in our prayer that we, each and all, will come to know him **personally and deeply**.

Then, in the confidence that will arise from such an intimate experience of his closeness to us, we will be able - bravely and generously - to take on the tasks he has in mind for us to do in the building up of His Kingdom here on earth.