

## One Hundred and counting.

Just watched the report of the Third Test Match against New Zealand. Not one, but two New Zealand batters hitting a century. As a cricketer it's of course a major success to reach such a number. It's worth mentioning here that in 2025 there were approximately 16,600 people who managed to reach the age of one hundred! Apparently that's double the number of twenty years ago. The King's Secretary must be inundated.

One hundred is an important number in the history of humankind. We have agreed worldwide to manage the years in terms of centuries. Even if, of course, other cultural calendars are still observed. Whilst waxing lyrical on the hundreds one might look back a whole century. In 1926 the first TV was patented (the Televisor) and the very first transatlantic phone call took place. Agatha Christie famously went missing and the first woman to swim the Channel, Gertrude Ederle, arrived safely. In global terms there were only two billion people on planet Earth.

This weekend's Gospel recalls a certain Centurion, a man who oversaw one hundred soldiers. He wonders if Jesus might heal his dying servant and receives his heart's desire. Jesus commends the soldier for his great faith. He won't have Jesus interrupting his teaching by going to his house. He is sure that Jesus has great authority and so can heal anyone from anywhere. We can too easily forget how radical a demonstration this is. Jesus declares that he has never seen such faith not even in Israel. In other words someone outside of the religious family had understood the things of God properly. I find this a challenging thought to ponder. If those beyond the family of the Church are capable of showing us the things of God, then we ought to be open enough, to hear or see those things, when they are right under our noses.

Funnily enough seven different Centurions are mentioned in the New Testament and all are men of dignity and integrity.

One hundred blessings to everyone!

