

5<sup>th</sup> April 2022

## Garbage

**“Garbage in, garbage out.”**

From the world of computing, often given as the acronym *GIGO*

The *GIGO* acronym in computer programming which is referenced above is based on a simple but important principle: incorrect or faulty input will always cause poor output. “Garbage in, garbage out” is right.

I forgot to put the bins out on my last week on Islay. It’s not that the programme for garbage collection on the island is complicated – there are two bins, a green one for landfill waste and a blue bin for everything that’s recyclable. It’s not that the pattern is hard to understand – green bin one week, blue bin the next. It’s not that I wasn’t provided with an idiot-proof chart – colour coded, indeed. It’s just that I forgot! It looks like the blue recycling bin will be full to overflowing for the next Locum minister to deal with. If there’s “garbage in”, then there has to be “garbage out” – on the correct day and in the proper bin. GIGO ...

The same is true for how we look after ourselves. If we abuse our bodies with an overindulgence of junk food, or alcohol, or drugs, in other words if we put lots of garbage in, we will have lots of garbage to dispose of. And I *don’t* mean bodily functions. I mean the destruction we cause to our well-being and the resulting garbage of overweight, or substance dependency, or even the shortening of life-expectancy.

Might the same be true for our spiritual well-being? If we take in garbage – extreme opinions; unfiltered attitudes; jaundiced views; indoctrination; social-media hype, and a host of other faulty or incorrect stuff that can potentially cause harm ... might we have to deal with the “garbage out” issue – the possibility of radicalisation; deep-seated unhappiness; dissatisfaction with life; aggressive attitudes to others?

So why don’t we ensure we remain healthy in our spirit as well as our bodies – associating with good people; responding thoughtfully to ethical dilemmas; being even-handed and open-minded in moral issues; checking out what may be false or inaccurate; taking action on things that will improve the lot of others and not perpetrate hate or destruction?

“Garbage in, garbage out” is true, while “Good things in, good things out” will make for a better, a healthier, God-centred world.

### **A prayer for today**

*Loving God, let me take in good things from you so that I might do good for others. Amen*