

Last Tuesday, just across the English Channel, a Catholic priest was murdered.

Last weekend, an Anglican priest in Nice, was jeered by his own people for suggesting the need for forgiveness and dialogue.

Pope Francis has suggested that a Third World War has already begun.

We Christians are in danger of being caught in the crossfire... And who exactly is fighting whom? Media pundits talk about Islamists in a life and death struggle with the whole edifice of western civilisation.

St Paul says, "*You must kill everythingthat belongs only to earthly life: fornication, impurity, guilty passion, evil desires and especially greed.*"

It seems to me that so-called 'western civilisation' is doing a pretty good job of destroying itself. Without wishing to be too judgemental so-called western civilisation does seem to have lost its way, to have lost touch with its spiritual roots, superficiality, *impurity*, defensiveness *and especially greed* seem to be the order of the day.

And we, Catholics Christians, are all implicated. As our civilisation collapses around us what have we done to rebuild it? Where do our own priorities lie? Is it *the things that are in heaven, where Christ is*? Or is it precisely those things *that belong only to earthly life*?

We don't want to impose some new form of Puritanism on our society, but we do need to do everything we can to reassert the fundamentally spiritual nature of what we are about.

The key message of today's gospel is when Jesus says, "*This very night the demand will be made for your soul*". We have already died and the life we now *have is hidden with Christ in God*. Every moment of our lives is to be lived in the presence of God. Every moment is a time of decision. Every moment is a prayer.

If Islamism is a protest against decadence then what we need to do is to dig deep into our spiritual roots, to bear witness to Jesus and to live our faith to the full. If that means suffering like Fr Jacques Hamel of St Etienne-du-Rouvray then so be it. What we can be sure of is that *when Christ is revealed – and he is your life – you too will be revealed in all your glory with him.....There is only one Christ and he is everything and he is in everything.*

Fr Michael