

On Face Book recently, I spotted one of those posts about what it was like back in the, in this case, fifties; specifically, food. Amongst its witticisms were statements like "...a Big Mac was what we wore when it was raining," and, "...a takeaway was something to do in arithmetic." What made me think, however, was, "...healthy foods were anything edible."

I thought about the piece of fish Jesus had after his resurrection - which was highly unlikely to have passed any hygiene standards today. His nourishment was provided by a piece of broiled left-overs. It's not just that technically his body needed the protein, it's that no lesser a person than the Messiah was perfectly content with what was available.

There are estimates that a third of the world's produced food never gets eaten. So, it would seem that despite the constant stream of "perfectly" shaped and sized (and out of season) food, it's not appreciated by a significant number of consumers anyway. Shameful that the millions of people in the world who would appreciate it - remember them: the starving or malnourished? - have to go without, while we don't even give a second thought to what we're throwing away. (Are you aware of West Norfolk's scheme to reduce food waste?)

At least at harvest festival there is a moment to consider and give thanks for what we have and the successful farming of land, sea and waterway which supplies it. Every culture in every age seems to have regularly given time to be thankful and respectful of what we have to sustain us.

In our society now, though, the absence of saying grace by those sharing a meal at dinner tables - indeed, the absence of tables! - means that a harvest festival once a year might be the only time we stop to think how blessed we are to have been born into a society that rarely sees starvation by lack of provisions.

My personal overview of history is that decadence becomes the terminal cancer of society when we lose sight of gratitude. Perhaps at this year's harvest thanksgiving we can start turning that around. Naturally, I'm going to suggest that we thank God for what we have; even if you can't bring yourself to do that, at least be thankful. It will be a start.