

The fire alarms have just gone off, again. It's 5.30am so this time it serves as an appropriate signal to get out of bed and compile this brief homily. - but this is the third time in so many weeks, and I know where the blighter is - it's in that end room which hasn't been used for a while and so some critter, one of God's creatures and all part of the evolutionary cycle of which has produced us, has made its home, again, in the sensor fixed to the ceiling and needing a ladder or a chair to be dealt with. I could deal with it gently and brush it aside, or give it a dose of what it deserves - a prolonged spray of poison. There is grumbling in my heart and someone is going to have to suffer - a whiff of revenge hangs in the air and I think of Afghanistan and the anger which fuelled its invasion and was still there at the very end in that drone strike which only served to seal the impotence of the whole project. Grumbling then as fatal to life and strictly warned against both in today's reading and the Rule of St Benedict.

'Above all do not let the pest of grumbling show its head for any reason whatsoever in any word or indication. If anyone is found guilty of this, he must be put under stricter discipline.' '

Our remedy, as always, is Christ - raised up on a cross, without grumbling.

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