**Ministerial Meandering**

*Ener - chi*

Our souls (be careful how you say this, particularly if you are reading this aloud) - our souls are the essence of our ‘being’. They are the indestructible source of universal energy - or ‘chi’, as the orientals call it. This is, in my view, the part of us that goes back to the God of our understanding when we die. For who knows what purpose? Re-cycling, transformation into another form of energy, an angel, another human being, a dog? - who knows?

Our souls (you should have got the emphasis on the second syllable by now) need nurture just as our minds and bodies do, but so often we don’t know how to do that.

You will have heard the phrase, ‘use it or lose it’ - usually referring to muscles and exercise, but also, sometimes, referring to our brains, so that we don’t lose our intellectual capacity as we age.

Our bodies need exercise (we know) to keep working and keep fit. They also need feeding. Some of us are rather better at the feeding aspect than the exercise part - but they need both.

Our minds (brains) also need exercise and feeding. We do the exercise by talking with others, playing chess, doing puzzles, crosswords, sudoku (heaven forbid!) and so on. We feed our brains by (eating appropriate foods and) reading, listening to debates, learning a language, an instrument, a new skill.

Our *souls* also need nourishment and exercising or they will become lost souls. Nourishment for our souls comes from any source that engages us with the forces of the universe in a sense of wonder that connects us with our God or Higher Power. Art, music, astronomy, interest in nature, meditation (of the listening kind). All of these should transform in us into a power for Love. Make no mistake, Love is Energy, Chi, Life-Force, and Jesus had it to the limit of his being. That should be our aim too.

You know when a person comes into a room and they give off their energy; sometimes it’s a bad feeling - negative energy; sometimes it’s intensely attractive - and it’s not just the aftershave or perfume. We talk about people ‘giving off vibes’, and that is what I am talking about. When that person leaves the room, their energy or essence goes with them, so when such people die, we feel their loss physically, as well as every other way. Sometimes, after they have died, we sense their presence around us - as if they were in the room with us; I don’t think that is so far-fetched if we can believe that their energy is the part of them that can never be destroyed.

Why should God not allow their essence to visit us in time of need occasionally after their passing? But that is to open up another subject for debate.

For now, I want us to think on how we feed our souls, and then how we use that food to exercise them. Is it not in acts of love for one another?

If, on the other hand, we feed our souls with negative and destructive energy - such as fighting, war, torture, violence and hatred in foul films and books - then how is that going to exercise itself except by expressing the same sort of violent destructive energy?

Jesus said that ‘what comes out of a man, that is what defiles him’, (Mark 7:20). That is why we need to keep our souls healthy, and the best way to do that is to bring them to Jesus every day for ‘servicing’ - in every sense of the word.

Philip+