

Faith Comment published in the Petersfield Post

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Unto us a son is born

The understated "Private Eye" headline "Woman has Baby" said quite a lot about our modern society. The birth of a child is always a cause for rejoicing, but is it really necessary to have three weeks of wall to wall royal baby, with or without reference to his mother's residual "baby bump"?

I am neither a curmudgeon nor a raging republican, but I have been driven to the brink of despair with all of this shallow and repetitive coverage of a perfectly natural event. There is something in the human being that positively requires us to have something to admire, dating back, I suppose to the days of primitive humanity where we could look up to the largest, fastest, bestest hunter as our alpha male on the basis that he was the best hope of providing for the pack. Prince George and his parents are currently filling that role.

From talented footballers, athletes to vacuous and not so vacuous 'slebs our modern society is riddled with any number of golden calves to worship. For some of our teenagers, the sole desire in life is to reach the slippery summit of fame. A little luck, a few moments in a reality show, or the exhibition of a modest talent brings with it worldwide fame for a few precious moments, before dropping them back into obscurity.

If only we could channel that desire to worship towards its true goal, God. And yet, as I write, I am looking at the extraordinary scenes on Copacabana beach where Pope Francis said his farewell Mass to an estimated three million people, at which he said "At times we lose people, because they don't understand what we are saying, because we have forgotten the language of simplicity and import an intellectualism foreign to our people... Jesus offers us something bigger than the World Cup!"

Indeed He does, He ought to be bigger than one small child with a weight of expectation on his newborn shoulders but actually, that is EXACTLY what he was Himself. It pays to remember that amidst all the hysteria.