**Letter from the Vicar**

Friday 1 May 2020

Sts Philip and James, Apostles

My Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

**Alleluia! Christ is risen.**

**He is risen indeed. Alleluia!**

May Day is celebrated in many different ways around the world. An old English tradition is singing madrigals at dawn from the top of church towers – I have enjoyed seeing some wonderful virtual versions of this today. Another English tradition of Maypole dancing would have taken place today. Others, and particularly those Churches dedicated in their honour, will remember Saints Philip and James – it was Philip who gave us the profound insight: ‘Lord, show us the Father and we shall be satisfied’. And still others around the world mark it as ‘International Workers’ Day’, which is fitting at this time as we give thanks for all key workers who are serving the common good.

May Day feels like a day of transition. A day when we move away from the darkness and cold of the winter and into the light and warmth of the approaching summer. Thankfully our weather today has been far better than the downpours of yesterday (Thursday) and the long range forecast for next week continues to look promising (in general). I’m sure that many of us have been enjoying spending time in our gardens during lockdown and, speaking for myself, the Vicarage garden hasn’t looked this good in the 6 years we have been here.

This weekend, had the pandemic not struck, would have been a busy one in the life of the Parish. We were due to celebrate St John, our Patronal Saint, with a big Choral Evensong and guest preacher (my former boss) The Very Reverend Dr John Hall, Dean Emeritus of Westminster. Music at St John’s had planned their annual Music Festival including, among other highlights, a special concert to commemorate the 75th anniversary of VE Day. It was to be a weekend of celebration and remembrance ahead of next Friday when the whole country would come together to remember the great sacrifice made by so many in laying down their lives in the pursuit of freedom and thanksgiving for the end of the war in Europe. I hope, that despite the various restrictions we are under, we will be able to honour the fallen this Friday and I encourage you to find out what your road/street is planning to do. I know some are planning a ‘distanced Street Party’ where residents stand at the end of their drives/doorways at 11.00am for a 2 minutes silence and at 4.00pm residents will have High Tea in their front gardens. We are encouraged to wear red, white, and blue and decorate our streets where possible. Please see the Newsletter as to what is being planned nationally including a sing-along with Dame Vera Lynn.

It is fitting also that only yesterday we celebrated a veteran of WWII clocking up 100 years. Captain Tom Moore, now promoted to Honorary Colonel, has inspired the Nation in walking 100 laps of his garden to raise money for the NHS. Hoping to raise £1000 the total raised stands at over £32million! His reaction as a fly-past of Spitfires acknowledged his effort was pure joy to watch.

As many of you will know by now I tend to remember pictures and faces better than words and names. Thank you to all who have supplied photos to help me remember you whilst I pray for you each day. It was also lovely to see people’s faces for various meetings and the online social events we held. If you would like to join the Wednesday Coffee Morning or the Thursday evening Happy Hour you will be most welcome. Please email me and I’ll send you the access link.

I hope you all continue to be in good health. Love, prayers, and the Blessing of the Risen Christ be upon you and those whom you love, for…

**Alleluia! Christ is risen.**

**He is risen indeed. Alleluia!**

In Christ,

 

The Reverend Michael Macey The Reverend Canon Dr Ruth Goatly

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