

## Letter from the Vicar

Friday 17 July 2020

My Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Normally at this time of year, with the schools breaking-up for the summer holidays, there is an element of anticipation and excitement in the air. Many of us would often take some time during these summer months to go away – possibly abroad – and get some well-deserved R&R. Talking to other parents at the school gate today on Sophie's last day of term the mood was more nuanced. The general feeling was that the forthcoming 6 weeks would be a breeze after 14 weeks of a mix of home schooling, full-time working, and the occasional day in the classroom. Most were planning trips within the UK but a significant number were just going to holiday at home and only a few were contemplating getting on a plane and going abroad. Over the coming weeks my family and I plan to take some time off together and hopefully visit grandparents. I don't mind admitting that the school holidays are much needed in our household!

Whatever your plans this summer, I hope you manage to get some rest. Although lockdown has meant that many of us have not been able to do our usual activities that does not mean to say it has been 'restful'. For many it has been incredibly stressful. For our keyworkers and their families it has been relentless. And now a new fear of job and financial security hangs over us along with the possibility of a second wave this autumn. I don't write this to scare you, but in order to encourage you to rest. We are stronger when we have rested and have the energy to face whatever is coming.

This Sunday was originally planned to be our Parish Fun Day with BBQ and games in the church grounds, hosting a visiting Bishop from the Caribbean. Sadly, with the current restrictions this will not been possible. It was also meant to be our choir's last Sunday on duty until September. I am hopeful that come September we will be able to sing again and the choir can once again lead us in our worship. But until then, I should like to thank them for the way they have inspired us over the last 12 months – even recording music at home to be edited together for us to enjoy – and I should particularly like to thank Keith, our Director of Music, who has worked throughout the pandemic to provide music for our worship and as camera technician extraordinaire! Without his skills and equipment our online services would have been vastly inferior. Thank you, Keith.

Instead of this Sunday being our Fun Day, I should like to encourage you to join DENS – our local Night Shelter and Food Bank – in helping folk in our community who are really struggling to put food on the table for themselves or their families; those who are homeless; those whose income has dramatically reduced. We can do this by contributing to our Food Bank or giving a financial donation. Please, if you are able can you bring something this Sunday (or over the coming week) to help those in need? The DENS campaign is called *Go Yellow for DENS* – perhaps, regardless of whether you are coming to Mass this Sunday, you could wear something yellow. I very much hope, as Church community, we can embrace this project and the work of this wonderful local charity.

As always please be assured of my prayers and best wishes for the coming week. I hope to see as many as are able to join us this weekend for Mass. Regardless, I hope you stay safe and well, confident and enfolded in the love of God: Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

In Christ,



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Vicar

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