

Letter from the Vicar

Saturday 15 May 2021

My Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Today, my family and I were supposed to be jetting-off to Rhodes for a week-long break. We had transferred our cancelled holiday from last year to this in the vain hope we would be able to travel. Then the Government's *Roadmap* was published and we realised our scheduled date of departure was 2 days ahead of the opening-up of international travel. Drat! The holiday has now been pushed forward another year. Just to torture ourselves, Emma and I looked at the weather forecast for Rhodes: glorious sunshine and 30C each day! But who needs that when you can have the splendid variety offered by our own island climate?

Despite my sadness and frustration at not being able to go on holiday yet, the Government's *Roadmap* seems to be holding steady. The intention for Step 3 to go ahead as of Monday 17 May seems to be going to plan, and more to boot. From Monday we can meet 6 people or another family indoors (and stay-over if desired or required); we can travel overseas; we can dine-out and drink in pubs and restaurants indoors; and we can hug loved-ones – but applying 'common sense'. This is most definitely a step towards returning to normal. It will be lovely to see the many pubs of this parish open again along with those shops that had been designated 'non-essential'. It will be lovely to be able to hug family and friends – how I/we have longed for and missed human touch and intimacy (and that's coming from someone whose children hug and crawl over him often!). It will be lovely to see wedding couples make their vows with up to 30 members of family or friends present.

Lockdown is slowly easing but Covid-19 hasn't gone away. The 'Indian variant' is rightly causing alarm – and our prayers continue to be offered for the peoples of India – but it appears our vaccination programme is working and will work against this strain. Well over half the adult of population have had one dose of vaccine – they have even got down to my age bracket (sub-40!) with about ¼ of the population being double-jabbed. This is phenomenal and praise where praise is due to the NHS for delivering this. If you haven't yet received your jab I hope it will be available to you soon.

On Thursday we celebrated The Ascension of Our Lord with a Deanery Eucharist at the Church of the Resurrection in Grovehill. 30 attended in-person with another 30+ joining via various virtual paths. This feast of Christ returning to the Halls of Heaven to sit at his Father's side judging the nations is so often overlooked and yet very important to our faith. For by Christ's ascension he takes all humanity to the heart of God to intercede on our behalf – our joys and woes, our pains and pleasures. His return to the Father enables him to live with us for all eternity through the coming gift of his Spirit. As we journey through these days leading up to Pentecost I invite you to pray for the gift of the Spirit to fall afresh on his Church, and to pray for family and friends who have not yet encountered Jesus (or whose faith has waivered) that they might come to know the living, loving, light of Jesus Christ.

I hope you are all keeping well and, as always, I send you my love and prayers. May the love and light of the Risen Christ bring us all joy and hope in believing, for:

Alleluia! Alleluia! Christ is Risen.
He is Risen indeed. Alleluia! Alleluia"



The Reverend Michael Macey

Vicar

01442 243258

vicar@stjohnsboxmoor.org.uk