



The Parish of Thorpe St Andrew

Passiontide 2020

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ (receiving this electronically),

Holy Week and Easter 2020

We find ourselves wondering whether Easter, this year, has been cancelled, in fact one or two of you have asked me that very question! We like to be active in this parish, with social events and services – not to mention the many within our community who find a home with us as they share family events in our churches, with christenings, weddings and funerals. Pretty much all of this has stopped, as we find ourselves locked out of our churches by a virus that no one can see but a whole world fear.

Yet, as I have written before we are called to be a Church of hope, embodying the story of Easter, remembering that new life sprang from the depths and despondency of death. The Covid-19 crisis has changed the way we live our lives and the way we understand church. My ministry is very different but although some are struggling with being isolated and having to rely on others it gives us the opportunities to show the servant-hearted nature of our church. Some have found the loss of control difficult, whilst others have embraced the new-found time to ponder the depth of their relationship with God and to 'do the garden.'

Jesus' command to love one another as he has loved us, made on Maundy Thursday, has new and poignant meaning for us in our time of isolation. It calls us to unite around our common purpose – the thing which draws us together – our faith in Jesus Christ - and to love one another with the same enthusiasm as he showed for us.

I have already provided a booklet of resources for prayer and reflection and there are things going onto our Facebook page and onto our Parish Life website – www.parish-life.co.uk But now (as the comedian Jimmy Cricket would say) there's more!!

We are very 'careful' with our resources here (it's my Scottish background, I think!) and last week I spent some hours delivering our weekly newsheet and prayer resources to many of you by hand – with 50 hand deliveries and 150 emails going out to our contacts. A local charitable trust – The Ivy Child Trust – has kindly provided resources to enable me to post this Easter mailing to you.

With this letter I am therefore able to enclose the following:

1. The Weekly Communication and Service Sheet for Sunday 5 April Palm Sunday
2. A Holy Week Booklet – with Stations of the Cross, An Order for Compline and a 'Virtual Calendar' of what we are doing.
3. Our Easter morning Order of Service.

Please do look at the calendar in the Holy Week to see what is coming up on Facebook. I have had a lot of generous comments and 1700 views for the Passion Sunday service – and counting! If you haven't yet found us on Facebook it can be found at

www.facebook.com/ThorpeStAndrewParishChurch

We are also planning on linking the Facebook services to our Parish Life website at www.parish-life.co.uk so please look there if it is easier for you.

I wanted to assure you all that I am only a phone call away and if you need **ANYTHING** please do be in touch. You are all in my prayers and I wish you all a holy and blessed Holy Week and a joyful Easter when it comes.

With every blessing,

James

James Stewart
Rector – Thorpe St Andrew

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