

Thought from the Vicar for April 2020

Is it just me, or do you think that the spring flowers and blossoms have been much more beautiful and more abundant this year? And the birds seem to be singing much more sweetly as if addressing their song of praise directly to God!

Maybe I think this because I don't normally take any time to go into the garden or to walk on the common, so I miss much of the beauty and birdsong. I'm usually too focussed on the services I must prepare for and the sermons and reflections I need to write. That is particularly the case at this time of the year as we journey through Holy Week on our approach to Easter. I don't mean that this year is any less busy, far from it, my delve into I.T. has taken me down an uncomfortable path that leads me down countless dead ends, depositing me in the mire of it all. But thankfully I have the experts to support me and retrieve my offerings. With grateful thanks to Sue and Ellen and Cyril. (and Neville)

And so, I journey on, planning and praying and preaching and listening to what God may be calling me to say. What do I need to hear this year as your Priest? What do we as a community need to support us as we come together in our separate homes to praise God.

The situation that we face today is unfathomable, it must call for particular prayers. How can we sum up our feelings. I still feel quite numb. The Psalmist brings us words that give expression to our cries to God for help: 'Incline your ear to me; rescue me speedily. Be a rock of refuge for me, a strong fortress to save me' (Ps.31:2). And yet we are still stunned by the sheer unbelievability of this situation. I think that it is at the heart of it. We cannot believe this could be

happening in our modern age, despite the evidence of changing climates we have still carried on thinking we are in control.

Where now can we turn? With the Psalmist we address our prayer to God, 'for you are my refuge. Into your hand I commit my spirit; you have redeemed me, O Lord, faithful God.' (Ps.31:4b-5).

We are now in Holy Week and we know that as we approach there is still more to endure, but there will be better days ahead. They don't come immediately, first we tread the path to Calvary, but even then, the signs of future resurrection will keep us company and cheer us on our way, heralded by bird song and carpeted by primroses.

So, let us give thanks for all that we can be grateful for, and put our trust in the Lord.

'Be strong and let your heart take courage all you who wait on the Lord'
(Ps.31:24).

God Bless you this Eastertide, Deborah

