



The Parish Church of St Mary Magdalen Knighton



25th March 2020

Friends,

We are truly in extraordinary times, and the Prime Minister's announcement on Monday of further restrictions on our movement and meeting means that the next few weeks will be challenging for all of us. I hope and pray that all of you are firstly well, and secondly, but no less importantly, well connected and supported.

Whilst watching the news coverage of the Coronavirus on television I have been struck by the depth of apprehension, even fear, amongst many people that the uncertainty surrounding the next weeks and months has created. Whilst it is very necessary for us to understand and abide by the restrictions and to have a sober, realistic view of the national and global situation, as Christians we are also called to be people of faith, hope and love - especially in the face of such challenges.

Psalm 27 begins with these verses:

The LORD is my light and my salvation— whom shall I fear?

The LORD is the stronghold of my life—of whom shall I be afraid?

These words are the reminder we all need - that there is someone to whom we can turn for peace and assurance, even in such extraordinary circumstances. If we neglect our faith, and allow our fear to crowd out and overshadow the time we should be giving to prayer, worship and the word of God, then we will be deprived of the light and strength we need and God longs to give us.

So can I encourage you, not only to follow the precautions needed to be physically healthy - and to keep others healthy too- but to take the precautions needed to be *spiritually, emotionally and mentally healthy* in this time of crisis?

I believe there is a simple prescription for such health:

daily - take a dose of the Bible read in the Gospels how Jesus brought healing in all sorts of ways, how he restored those trapped by the circumstances of their lives, how he gave them purpose and direction, and drew forth faith in those who followed him....

twice daily, morning and evening (or more if needed) - sit quietly and pray lay before God the troubles on your mind and the disturbances of your heart, and simply let him have the time to bring you peace...

at least daily, do something for someone else a single phone call or wave across the street can make all the difference to someone else feeling cut off....

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daily - feed yourself with something good and positivesuch as music, a craft activity, exercise, an old movie.....it might also be wise to restrict watching the News to once a day, and not just before bedtime!

Finally, do read the enclosed newsletter to keep in touch with our church family (it's also on the Church website) and be in touch with myself or anyone else in the Ministry Team if you would like to talk or need some practical help - don't let a misguided sense of pride or self-reliance hold you back at this most serious of times, and allow others to help.

Although we are not now able to have the church building open, you can also keep in touch through the church website www.stmarysknighton.co.uk and our Facebook page.

Psalm 27 ends with these verses:

"I remain confident of this: I will see the goodness of the LORD in the land of the living.

¹⁴ Wait for the LORD; be strong and take heart and wait for the LORD."

yours in friendship and Christ's service

Adrian