

Dear friends,

On this 5th Sunday of Lent, there will be a plethora of virtual worship possibilities open to us – most previously advertised but I'll remind you of them this morning as well until we get used to them. But you'll be pleased (or not!) to learn that I too am making a foray into this brave new world of electronic media and I have recorded a Youtube video of me reflecting on the readings of the day from my study. If you'd like to listen to that reflection just click on the link below. I chose Youtube because you don't need to be a member to watch anything on it unlike facebook (so I understand) so it is more inclusive.

<https://youtu.be/cNvaBD4diZU>

I am still posting a written version on my Blog as well, so if you'd prefer to read it click on this link. <https://revmartinjacques.blogspot.com/2020/03/can-these-bones-live.html>

Worship and other resources

So for virtual Sunday worship I will be recommending the Church of England's facebook page which will broadcast a Sunday service I believe at 9am, and on Radio 4 at 8am. <https://www.facebook.com/thechurchofengland/> Exeter Diocese also will be broadcasting on their facebook page. <https://www.facebook.com/CofEDevon/>

I also see from a quick scan of the schedules that a new series of Sunday morning worship starts on BBC1 at 11.45.

Don't forget to light a candle in your window at 7pm tonight, a sign that the light and love of Christ is always with us.

If you are of a more traditional frame of mind the Prayer Book Society is also live streaming various Book of Common Prayer services whenever they can. To keep abreast of what is happening when and where, their website is; <https://www.pbs.org.uk/>

I will attach again two types of spiritual resources to print off. The first is produced by the Church of England and is called "Spiritual communion", which as the name implies is communion without actually physically receiving the bread and wine, and the other is a form of spiritual prayer I wrote some time ago and I think it is time to resurrect it. I originally called it "Practising the presence of God" but is now the RMC prayer leaflet and takes its inspiration from the Ignatian tradition.

Further to this, following my own Spiritual trajectory I continue to recommend the on-line prayer resource “sacred space” produced by the Irish Jesuits. This is the one I follow. It has soothing background music (optional) and takes you through a daily prayer routine at your own speed plus a reading of the day. Ignatian Spirituality, to me, is like a form of Christianity with a Buddhist aesthetic if you will! <https://www.sacredspace.ie/daily-prayer>

Pastoral support in this trying time.

Reverend Karen Young has compiled a list of vulnerable people and people living on their own and assigned a list to several helpers to phone from time to time. Thankfully, everyone I have contacted has been fine and supported by neighbours and friends and members of our church. We are all in this together so if you can think of anyone else, please do give them a ring yourself. But if you can think of anyone you think might have slipped under the radar please contact either Karen or myself and we'll do our best to find contact details for them or pass their details on to the Hub who is co-ordinating the community response. Thank You.

Support on a community level has blossomed thanks to a coalition of the school head, Steve, the council, the Hub, the health centre the Lions, and the churches. If you are desperate for a food delivery of essential items or are in dire financial need, please contact <https://www.budleighsupport.co.uk/>

Note: Our wonderful website carries much valuable information including daily prayer resources and the on-line pew sheet that continues to be produced by Fran. <https://www.raleighmissioncommunity.org.uk/>

More words of wisdom from Fr. Joshua in Dallas Texas,

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-jUI2jGcVVs>

Musical interlude!

I love this. Hallelujah by Panic! At the disco. They used to play it as a backing track to a routine in a gym we used to go to in Newcastle. I also played it in a school assembly – the kids loved it - all together now.... <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DxYyHHR0Q1c>

Musical interlude (2)

Tony Gray's (our treasurer at St. Peter's) daughter has posted this song on facebook. A very talented family indeed! <https://www.facebook.com/jennyvghn/videos/10163147081545640/>

The Lighter side!

Theological problems confront Bill Bailey when he tries to hire a car. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ECvwnV62pdc>

Thought for Today

I hear today that our Prime Minister Boris Johnson and health secretary Matt Hancock has succumbed to the virus as well. We pray for them both, Rishi Sunak the chancellor, the medical experts and scientific advisors who are all leading and co-ordinating the national response to this crisis. Rather than a time for political point scoring and manoeuvring, this is the time for coming together and supporting our leaders just recently returned in a landslide victory in a fair and democratic election. If they succeed, we succeed.

Credit where credit is due - I think they have responded extremely well in dire unexpected circumstances and I for one am grateful that I live in the UK rather than any other part of the world just now. The response was never going to be perfect; nothing ever is. There will be loose ends – there will always be those - but the overall response has been marvellous and I hope, effective in keeping victims of this disease down to the lowest amount possible.

The Prayer for Today is produced by the Church of England and is for those in isolation during this crisis.

FOR THOSE IN ISOLATION

God of compassion be close to those who are ill, afraid or in isolation. In their loneliness, be their consolation; in their anxiety, be their hope; in their darkness, be their light; through him who suffered alone on the cross, but reigns with you in glory, Jesus Christ our Lord.

Love and peace,

Martin