



THE PARISH OF ST. MARGARET, INGOL



Hello dear friends,

I hope this letter finds you all well and coping? 12 weeks in and some of you still shielding and at home, not easy, I am sure you must be getting tired of it all now. I know lots of people are finding it all a bit wearing, but these are difficult times and we need to still be aware that the virus has not gone away, and if you look at the R rate for Preston this week it is still up at 1, not the best news, so we need to be aware and careful all the time. So even if you are off to the zoo, and yes, we can go there from June 15th next week, do take care and be safe when you are out.

As you may have seen on the news and in the media, there has been an announcement that we are allowed to open churches for private prayer as from 13th June. Government and Diocesan guidelines have indicated that this will be up to individual churches, the responsibility of the priest and the church wardens to make the decision whether or not to open church if they feel it is safe to do so. This has been the hardest decision to make. What to do to keep everyone safe, but at the same time let people into church for some much-needed Spiritual comfort and prayer has been hard. The Churchwardens and I have decided that, at the moment, in the best interests and safety of everyone concerned, we do not feel that opening church for private prayer would be safe. I am so sorry, when it is felt to be safe to open we will let you know.

One of the challenges I have set during the time we have been in lock-down is for people to send me photos of what they have been up to. I hope to get enough pictures to be able to create a picture collage to go in church, eventually, to record this extra-ordinary time and what we have gotten up to. How, I wonder, will we remember this time we are living through now? I have heard from many people things like "I lived through the second world war", "I remember petrol at £1.00 a gallon", I remember.....I remember..... how will we all remember all this? Will we just blot it from our memories and not bother? I have a friend who has diarised it, with permission I have included some musings for you to read.

Remember when.....

Panic buying set in in those early days, but it seems that eggs and flour are the main things that people struggle to get.

Manufacturers, distilleries and other businesses have switched to make visors, masks, hand sanitiser and PPE.

Fines have been established for breaking lockdown rules and this has been done to break up any house parties.

You are still not allowed to visit or stay anywhere other than your own home but you are allowed to drive to an exercise place (like a bigger park area) but they would prefer that you stay within 25 miles of your home. Public toilets aren't open yet so they advise that people stay away from beaches, if you don't live by one.

Meeting people outside wearing masks and gloves has become "normal"

There is still a shortage of masks and gowns for front line workers.

There is a shortage of ventilators for the critically ill in many parts of the world. Formula One racing teams and Virgin Galactic designed and built ventilators in the space of a week.

Tape on the floor in supermarkets is now a normal sight to help safe distance shoppers from each other. Essential service workers and NHS are given priority shopping times.

There are still no masses in churches.....

It is interesting, as I read it, to hear myself saying already - did we do that then? - I remember that.....What will we feel about all this when we look back in 12 months' time? In 5 years' time? In the meantime, any photos of what you have been doing would be greatly appreciated, just e-mail them to me, or if desperate send them to me in the post, I can scan them and get them back to you, and I can use them on the collage.

And so we journey on, together, yet still apart. Still wondering where this is all going and what the outcomes will be. There have been some huge steps forward in the past few days, and yet not so many really. We still need to be careful; the virus is still out there; it has not gone away. Preston has a particularly high R rate, and that cannot be ignored. We still need to look out for each other, help where we can. If anyone needs anything please just shout, my e-mail is revrie52@outlook.com or the number is 01772 727208.

I enclose the service sheets for the next 2 weeks, please join in with me as I go into church on Sundays at 10am to undertake the service for you and "with you", I know so many join me, a great blessing and a huge comfort.

Stay safe now, oh no I'm supposed to say that anymore am I? it's stay alert...what's a "lert"? goodness only knows!

My love and every blessing to you all as I continue to hold you close in prayer.

Rev Rie

-x-