

24. 03. 20



Dear All

How are we coping? With black humour; with tears; with worry and anxiety; with support, as best we may, from family, neighbours and friends?

The Bible says “Do not fear, for I am with you, do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you, I will uphold you with my righteous right hand” (Isaiah 41).

These verses tell us God will help us through whatever we face. They don't guarantee we will avoid the difficult times, yet for many Christians, prayer has resulted in healing or protection. So it is right we should pray for that and the Bible gives many promises of its effectiveness, yet I reflect on the thought that in a world like ours which spends so much of its time out of tune with God it is perhaps not surprising that prayer does not always result in what we seek. But whatever your experience of prayer the one thing that God guarantees is that he is always with us ready to strengthen us and help us whatever the situation we face. We just need to turn to him, to find him, to pray. The simple prayer “God help us” has been answered by God millions of times over the centuries. So whilst I have no magic answer as to what's happening in the world, **from my experience I do believe that somehow God holds us together and supports us through the worst situation. I can't offer much more than that, and for me there have been times when that has meant everything.**

At St Mary the Virgin sadly there will be no services until further notice and the church building is now closed for the first time for many, many years but we will be in touch with offerings for prayer and worship, as well as a brief Sunday Reflection each week. You might also like to make use of Radio 4 daily and Sunday Services, and programmes like Song of Praise where you can join in with the singing

Also Baptisms and weddings cannot take place for the time being, and I will be in contact with those planned for the coming weeks. Funerals can continue but with strict controls.

As long as I keep healthy I am here for you to talk with, to ask for help, to berate, or to join in celebration as the occasion demands.

You might think I have a hot line to God, but I don't know what the future holds and I don't understand what's going on any better than the rest, but I hang on to the above Bible verse with my shaky human faith, and continue to pray earnestly for this whole community.

God loves you

God bless you all,

Rob

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