

How did it get to August? Talking to the year 6 leavers the other week, we were saying that as a class there has never been a group of children who have experienced what they have over the last few months and Head of School Mr Finch suggested that in years to come their children and grandchildren will ask 'what did you do during the Covid19 Summer of 2020'?

One thing that marks out this summer is that holidays will be different. I'm writing this on St James's day, 25th July. A few years ago we were on holiday in a small French village in the Pyrenees. We'd just arrived late at night hoping for a quiet night after a long journey, but around 11pm music started which went on most of the night! It wasn't until the next day chatting to some locals we learned that the village church was dedicated to St James and what we'd heard were the celebrations.

One trip planned for this year we won't be doing is to continue our pilgrimage towards Santiago de Compostela. Santiago (St James) is the place where by tradition his body is buried, after making the journey from Jerusalem not long after Jesus' death and resurrection. James, along with his brother John were one of the first followers of Jesus – like Peter and Simon they were fishermen when Jesus called them to fish for people instead!

What marks St James out is that tradition says he was one of the first of Jesus followers to die a martyr's death for following Jesus in the face of persecution. James serves, then as the example of someone who followed Jesus no matter what life threw at him. His journey can be ours. It's no wonder that James is also the patron saint of pilgrimage, and hopefully before long we, along with many others, will be able to start retracing our steps towards his resting place.

But while physical pilgrimage remains difficult, spiritual pilgrimage continues to mean we can navigate the present 'new normal' of post-lockdown life with the assurance that the risen Jesus that James worshipped we can still worship today.

As lockdown eases, you remain in my prayers. Please do not hesitate to contact me if I can help in any practical or pastoral way - vicar@pcd.org.uk tel 01959540012. Rev John Musson