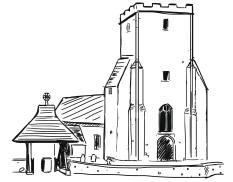


St Mary the Virgin: Parish of East Preston with Kingston



from the Vicar:

Fr Andrew Perry

The Vicarage, 33 Vicarage Lane, East Preston Littlehampton, West Sussex BN16 2SP

Saturday, 4 April 2020

Dear Friends

Stewardship

You don't need me to remind you that we are living in strange and peculiar times! Our normal patterns and activities are in limbo and self isolation brings all sorts of challenges - but opportunities too.

I do hope you've been able to access some of the resources we've been able to produce and distribute: I'm very grateful to Rev Emma for all the work with Social Media she's been doing and a lot of phoning round has been going on, which is great.

Sadly now we've been advised to stop sending paper copies of the Notice Sheet each week to those who haven't got internet access. This is because paper is considered a contamination risk.

Another area of our church life suffering due to the Lockdown is the church finances. Because we are not meeting we've not had collections, and St Mary's is not getting its usual level of financial support. Sadly we still have bills to pay, and if we're not careful we are going to emerge from this crisis in a precarious financial position.

If you support St Mary's by using a monthly Standing Order from your bank - thank you! This is still continuing and is extremely helpful: there's nothing more you need to do.

If you support St Mary's by using the envelope scheme, or putting cash on the collection plate each week, there are two things you could do: you could periodically post the envelopes through the Vicarage door while out on your constitutional - but not if you're self-isolating, obviously.

But perhaps the best thing you could do is consider supporting St Mary's by arranging a Standing Order from your bank (or building society). At your instruction the same amount of money you usually physically put on the plate will be transferred from your bank account to the church bank account. This amount will **ONLY** change if you direct the bank to make it change. Your support will continue even when you're not in church (through self isolation, illness, holiday etc). There are many advantages to using a Standing Order:

- ♦ it's safer and much more secure
- ♦ you don't have to worry about getting the right change sorted out each week
- ♦ there's less paper work
- ♦ nobody has to count money or take it to the bank
- ♦ the banks are getting less keen on dealing with coins and notes in the current climate
- ♦ you are in charge of how much you want to give and when it goes out
- ♦ once set up you can forget about it, knowing you're supporting St Mary's
- ♦ St Mary's knows what the income will be each month, so we can plan better

So please - if you can - do think about switching to supporting St Mary's by a Standing Order.

To do this you'll need to complete the form that comes with this letter. Once filled in it needs to be put in an envelope (marked "Stewardship") and come to the Vicarage: the Gift Aid Secretary will process the forms.

These are unusual times and we are all having to adjust and do things differently. Supporting St Mary's by a Standing Order may be one of these new and different ideas - but it is a really helpful way we can ensure that the church can pay its bills and meet its obligations.

If you are at all worried, or would like your completed form collected from your house, please do give me a ring: stay safe!

Thank you for considering this change - I greatly appreciate your support for our life together at St Mary's.

With all best wishes

