

Thought for the Week beginning 12th April

(Do click on the [links](#) as you read... and ask if you can use the Facebook page to tell us what you like and agree with in Rodney's letter.)

Hello Everyone,

How has your week been? How are you feeling? What are your emotions as we enter another week of social distancing; one that just happens to start with Easter Sunday?

I find it is quite helpful to look back at the end each week and think about the events and images that have left an impression. I think about how they make me feel: grateful, regretful, sad, hopeful. At the moment our experiences are limited by the immediate surroundings of our own homes and by what we hear or see on the TV, radio and social media. If we were together this Sunday I would have asked you to give me your impressions of the week and how you feel about them.

There was certainly sadness – at the rising number of people dying from the virus. I listened on the radio to the wife of a man who was very ill and who pleaded with medical staff to allow her to visit with her two children. Movingly she described how the compassion of the medical staff had enabled her to see her husband, perhaps for the last time, and what it had meant to her and the children even though they could not touch him or have a conversation with him.

There was also sacrifice too. In her message to the country this week, in another stand out moment of the week, the [Queen talked about the sacrifice](#) we are all making in order to prevent the virus spreading further. And I was mesmerised and humbled when a BBC film crew went into an intensive unit to record the work of medical staff putting their own lives at risk to save the lives of people who are very ill.

Of all weeks, Holy Week is the one that, even in easier times, brings us to think about the sadness of Jesus' death, the horrible nature of it and the sacrifice He made for us. What is happening around us now make those emotions sharper and more relevant at this Easter time.

There has been quite a bit of discussion in the media about what our country and the world will look like after we have beaten the virus. Interesting that it isn't 'if' we beat the virus, but 'when' we will beat it. There is a feeling of hope that we will find a vaccine and perhaps that we will be a more compassionate society, looking out for our neighbours, volunteering to do the shopping or keep in touch, providing the resources needed by the NHS, valuing people who have served on the checkout in Sainsbury's or the drivers of the busses – the sort of people we normally take for granted but whose work is as valuable as any other.

The Bible reading for this week is **Matthew 28 verses 1-10**. It is Matthew's account of the visit of Mary Magdalene and her companion, also called Mary, and their encounter with the risen Jesus. In the society of that time it was women how were less valued to the extent that they were not considered to be reliable witnesses. Yet Jesus entrusted them with the task of acting as witnesses to His resurrection. They must have wondered how, after all that had happened, the world might change and a new hope established.

Happy Easter

Rodney