

Hello Everyone,

By my reckoning we are entering the fourth week of lockdown, but I'm losing count and I might be wrong. And we have another three weeks at least of isolating. We have just experienced Easter without sharing together in hymn singing, prayers, Easter liturgies, or Holy Communion. But there was much to inspire our own private devotions with material produced by our own church for online consumption and some excellent devotions on television and radio. The spirit of Easter, for me anyway, was never far away. I hope you too found it to be a special and a blessed time.

What was your image of this special week? Mine was the pictures of [99 year old Tom Moore](#) crouched over his Zimmer frame, smartly dressed in jacket and military medals, walking around his garden and raising what is a truly remarkable sum of money for NHS charities. It is a total he could never have dreamed of (at the time of writing over £15 million). It is a triumph of the human spirit. Would he ever have imagined that in his 100th year he would do something that would change so many people's lives.

Time and time again ordinary people are chosen to do remarkable things and I'm reminded that Jesus himself chose ordinary people to do extraordinary things. This week's bible reading is very appropriate in that respect. In [John Chapter 20 verses 19 – 29](#) Jesus appears to some of the disciples after his resurrection. They are fearful and isolated, behind locked doors to protect themselves from people who might harm them. They are self-isolating! John tells of the impact of Jesus' appearance, how he calms them and gives them the power to do extraordinary things and set off a chain of events that will change the world. It's a remarkable moment of intimacy between them.

The passage also highlights the importance in our relationships of sight and touch, something that we can appreciate because of the current limitations brought about by social distancing. FaceTime and Zoom are all very well, but they are no substitute for physical closeness. I often collect people from Gatwick Airport and I love sitting or standing at the point where passengers emerge into the terminal to meet family or friends, to watch their reactions at the point of reunion. You cannot help but smile.

Even after the relaxation of the current restrictions, social distancing of some sort will probably continue to be part of our lives for some time to come. But in the final verse of the bible passage Jesus reminds us that we are all united in His spirit even though we cannot see or touch Him, or indeed touch or see those whom we love and care for.

Peace be with you.

Rodney