

**All Saints' Church
Cottenham with Rampton**

**Pastoral Letter #73
July 2022**



Dear Church Family,

Grace, mercy, and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ be with you.

We are now starting a time of transition in the Church calendar. After Easter, Ascension, Pentecost, Trinity Sunday, and now Pentecost, the season of ordinations, we are entering the long period of the liturgical year that stretches all through summer and autumn. We call it 'Ordinary Time' because we use ordinal numbers to count the weeks, but of course, there is nothing ordinary about this period. And interestingly, the liturgical colour associated with it is green.



I wonder what springs to mind, when you think of the colour green... well-being, health? Renewal, perhaps, as we see it in new plants shooting up in the sunshine... In a more religious sense, the colour green represents freshness, hope, and goodness: the love of God for us, poured out afresh on all of us every day.

As I write these lines, I am on retreat for my ordination as a priest on July the 2nd. And I am going through a major transition: after over 40 years working as a translator, I have left the translation industry and I am now working just a few hours a week helping my husband with his own business. The rest of my time, I dedicate to family, friends, and, of course, ministry.

I would be lying if I said that this transition was easy. We all go through major periods of change, and these all have one thing in common: they leave us vulnerable. Vulnerability is uncomfortable, it reminds me of a veil being lifted, exposing the fragility beneath, the things that we would prefer not to show, but that God sees and blesses, because he loves us. But this vulnerability allows for change and for growth in Christ.

In this new season, nature looks green and glorious, because it is touched by light. If some foliage is too dense, it needs cutting back so that it does not throw a heavy shadow on the grass below. A canopy can act as a shelter, but also as curtains that block the light. And I think that in this green season, God calls us to draw back the curtains of our hearts and minds to let His light and inspiration in.

In this Ordinary Time, I do think we are all called to rejoice in the greenery of new life, and to listen more carefully than ever to the voice of God, so that whatever change God wants for us can happen, peacefully and harmoniously.

My ordination retreat was led by Bishop John Pritchard, author of some wonderful books on prayer and writing intercessions. And he reminded us of what it means to listen. We can listen out of habit, distractedly, from outside; we can listen with intent, from inside; and we can listen prayerfully. When we listen to God, we are *attentive*. And it is this attentiveness that we need to cultivate in order to grow, individually and collectively. Bishop John talked of attentiveness to others, to the world, to ourselves, and to God. When we listen to God, we focus on the source of all life and growth. It requires a lot of quietness, which is not always easy to find, but as Christians, we are called to try and focus on the source, because it is Christ who draws us in in the Holy Spirit.

And in the quiet, we can seek the new: new ideas, new message, new perspectives, new relationships and possibilities, new ways of sharing our faith, even.

All might not be green and sprouting with life around you at this time, things might look dark and bleak. But my prayer for you at the start of this new season is that you will find the time – and perhaps the courage – to lift that veil that hides the source of love for you, Child of God, cut back the heavy foliage, draw back the curtains, and let God in.

May you find renewed energy to enjoy the Lord and be His hands to do His work, His lips to sing His praise, His feet to walk alongside all who seek Him.

Many blessings,

Revd Marie Lucchetta-Redmond

marielucchetta@live.com

07841 665 832

