

THOUGHT FOR THE DAY – March 19-31 2020 during 'LOCKDOWN 1'

March 19th - A prayer for the evening

This is a favourite prayer

If you have any prayer requests please let Des know and we at St Mark's Church will pray for you.

*Lighten our darkness, O Lord
and by your great mercy defend us from all perils and dangers of this night,
for the love of our Saviour Jesus Christ.
Amen.*

March 20th - A Prayer for today

Here is a prayer to remind us that hope, as well as being something for the future, is also built on past experience.

Rev Des

*Dear God,
Too often I remember the bad things and not the good.
Help me to see things as they are,
full of happy moments not to be taken for granted.
As I reflect on my life,
let me know hope and all the moments will be good ones.
Amen*

March 21st - Hope

I was sent this poem this morning, 21st March, from Alison, I don't know if she wrote it or someone else. Also this morning I spoke with a friend on the phone about 1 Corinthians 15 where the Apostle Paul speaks of heaven and how our heavenly body will be like an oak tree compared to the acorn that this earthly body is. The chapter ends with this great verse.

So then, my dear friends, stand firm and steady. Keep busy always in your work for the Lord, since you know that nothing you do in the Lord's service is ever useless. Every phone call, caring act, loving thought counts!

HOPE

Hope believes in the future
stands out against drabness
like bright red rose hips
against withered winter leaves.

When life seems dull
it says there will be surprises
like the crocuses
breaking through the cold snow.

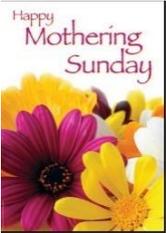
Like the frost edging the ivy leaves
it adds a sparkle
a gift to be treasured
as if it were a diamond.



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A candle flame in the darkness
an oasis in the desert
capture and hold it close
it will transform you.

March 22nd - Mother's Day



Some thoughts and prayers for Mothering Sunday <https://youtu.be/7CATICxKLYE>

Happy Mothering Sunday. At St Mark's we normally celebrate Mothering Sunday by giving mums prosecco, chocolates and posies. This year there is none of that but mums - you are still appreciated!

The day was originally to remember the Church as our Mother as God is our Father. If we can pray for you or help shop for you if you are in isolation let me know, perhaps that way the church can show you some Motherly love. May God bless you and keep you, May God's face shine on you and give you peace. Amen

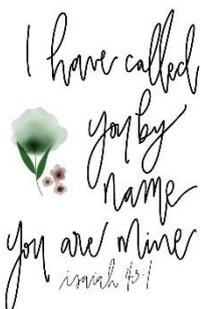
March 23rd - Philippians 4:6,7 NIV



Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.
Philippians 4:6-7 (NIV)

Today's prayer is a Bible verse. It tells us not to be anxious - easily said! It basically says whatever is on your mind or heart present it to God and God's peace will fill your heart. It doesn't say God will fix it, but God's peace will come. As someone who suffers depression, anxiety regularly knocks on my door! I try and send God to answer it!!

March 24th - I have called you by name, you are mine. (Isaiah 43:1)



I have tidied up my email address book today. It was a hard day depression-wise so that was all I could bring myself to do. I was amazed at how many people I know ... and love and am loved by. It put this verse in my mind about God knowing us.

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March 25th



Hope has been on my radar today. We will need a lot of patience in the weeks and months to come, but rather than just grind through each new day hope tells us that there are lessons to learn as we go because we will be different people when we arrive at the other end. This is the Christian message of Hope - it is patience or endurance with God's Light drawing us forward and leading us on. I remember a

very dark time in my life when I heard the little voice of God reassuring and had a sense that God was holding my hand.

God of hope help us to learn lessons from this dark time that may help us live better when we have weathered the storm!

Rev Des

March 26th – Friendship

One elderly couple I know went out and delivered milk to someone who had to isolate due to a fever. They would normally be seen as the recipients of such help but instead they were the givers. This was a generous act of love and friendship and made me think of this verse. It is good to hear of many other stories of help - many of which could be between future friends! - I rather liked this picture.

Some friendships do not last, but some friends are more loyal than brothers Proverbs 18:24

Rev Des



March 27th - Love is patient and kind

Love is patient and kind; it is not jealous or conceited or proud;

love is not ill-mannered or selfish or irritable;

love does not keep a record of wrongs;

love is not happy with evil, but is happy with the truth.

Love never gives up; and its faith, hope, and patience never fail.

Confinement can be hard work! 7 adults in our house, vegan through to serious carnivore, and that isn't the dog! Love is hard work but it doesn't fail - that doesn't mean we don't fail but when we do if we truly love then we'll have another go at being patient, holding on to hope, and exercising faith.

Love

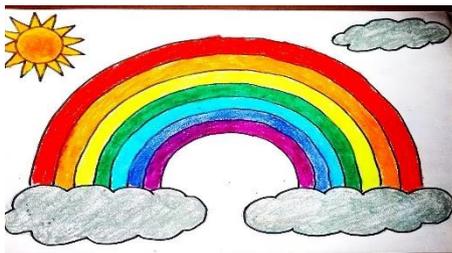
- Is patient
- Is kind
- It does not envy
- It does not boast
- It is not proud
- It is not rude
- It is not self seeking
- It is not easily angered
- It keeps no record of wrongs

Love does not delight in evil, but rejoices with the truth. It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres.

Love Never Fails

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March 29th - Service

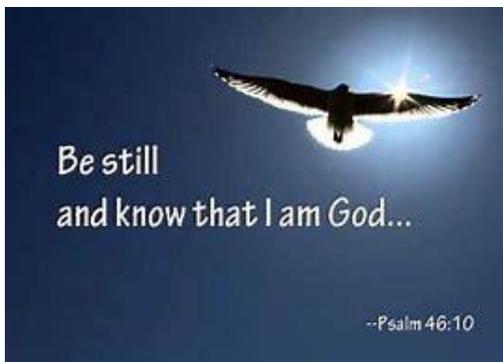


Children have been drawing rainbows and displaying them in their windows - You may have seen some if you have been out walking as your daily exercise. I saw some drawn by kids I know as I walked past their house and others by kids I don't know. Although I didn't know some of the kids I still felt a sense of connection, a sense of 'we are hoping together'.

The rainbow appears in the story of Noah and his ark and while we shouldn't take the story literally it does remind us that when things get really bad there needs to be some washing! - Are you doing your 20 second routine? The rainbow in the story was a sign of a promise that God would not take such drastic action as starting from scratch again. Instead the washing that the early church understand is that Jesus, in dying becomes like a sacrifice to wash away sin instead. I don't really get the washing bit as I wasn't brought up with animal sacrifice! However, I do get that Jesus invites us to lay down our lives with him for the sake of others, for the sake of Love. It is this Love that conquers all that gives us hope for the future.

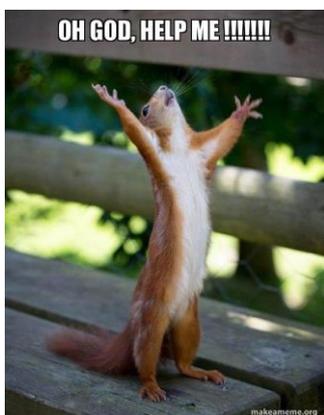
You can find our service for 29th March by following this link
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IPf5rZfB5yg>

March 30th - Be Still and know that I am God



Be still and know that I am God - often these words are used to introduce quiet prayer or meditation. They come from Psalm 46, which, if I am reading it correctly, sounds like it was written when Jerusalem was under siege. Being locked down may feel a bit like a siege and with the threat of sickness it is not easy to be still. I do what I call the 100 breath meditation. I sit with eyes shut and count 100 slow breaths while in an attitude of being connected to God. Try it -if you don't believe in God try a sense of being connected to the world around. Rev Des

March 31st - O God, Help!



Oh God, Help!- that was my reaction when I came to the laptop to do this thought for the day and it was dead! Wouldn't switch on -totally dead. I tried taking the battery out and putting it back! NOTHING. It reminded me of many years ago as a teenager and I felt life had no meaning and no direction and I cried out 'Oh God, if you're there, help' Something changed that day that has marked me for the rest of my life. I wonder how many people might have a similar experience during this crisis?

Des