

Dear friends

With the rollout of the vaccine, we look forward in hope to a brighter future, to a time when we will be able to gather together, to hug each other and be able to live free of Covid restrictions. But we also look back over the past year when over 100,000 people have died due to Covid; those we knew and loved dearly, those we cared for and sought to protect, those we were not allowed to visit, hold their hand or even attend their funeral. We feel robbed of the life we could and should have had.

And yet time rolls on regardless, unconcerned, dispassionate, neither speeding up nor slowing, completely oblivious to our cries or our needs. We cannot go back and relive precious memories, nor can we stop time and simply cherish the moment. We can only look back with hindsight, hoping we have made more good decisions than bad, that our joys exceed our disappointments. Perhaps it seems cruel that God should constrain us to the relentless march of time, never having the opportunity to rewrite our history or erase our mistakes.

But then God has given us all the same amount of time each day, the same hours, minutes and seconds, whether we are old or young, rich or poor, deserving or not. He gives us each day as a gift to use for good or ill, in service or for self-service, to hurt or to heal, to love or to hate. Each morning is a choice.

God wants us to realise each day is unique, we cannot have that day again. So let us live each day wisely, cherishing each moment. As we come out of lockdown and our lives return to some degree of normality, I pray that we won't too quickly forget this past year, however much we may wish to, and that the experiences we have endured will strengthen our resolve to redeem the time and to deepen our commitment to one another.

I look forward to the day we will be able to open our churches once more, to worship together and to celebrate our love for each other. Until then be safe and be kind.

God bless you always.

John