

## Summer Holiday

I am writing this in early June, before the government announces the level and timing of the final relaxation of covid restrictions. Even at this stage, though, relatively unrestricted travel is allowed to a few countries, and people have started booking and taking their Mediterranean and other holidays. I don't begrudge that. We live in a pressured world, and a good break from work is really necessary. I have encouraged our clergy to make sure they take one.

However, I have a challenge for all of us who fly, for whatever reasons. Flying is very, very, heavy in its carbon cost. Why don't we all consider offsetting the damage we are doing to the planet when we book a flight? If you look at this online, through one of the sustainable travel or carbon capture websites, you will find that for between £25 and £50 you could plant enough trees to offset the carbon cost of your return flight to any short or middle distance destination. We are doing this as a diocese when we visit our link diocese in Korea (long-distance, about £75 per head to offset), and I will suggest it to those who travel with me on pilgrimage to the Holy Land (less than £50 per head). In practice, it comes to around ten percent of the cost of the flight.

One of the remarkable things about holidays away from home is that God's creation can actually re-create us. The beautiful world we live in, whether it is the Lake District or the Scottish hills which I enjoy, or the Mediterranean sunshine which blesses others, somehow enables us to relax and unwind, then re-energises us. Thank God for this wonderful provision.

This shouldn't be a surprise. "Holiday" is "holy day", originating from the pilgrimages of the Old Testament, running through the saints' days of medieval Christendom, through to our bank holidays and summer breaks today. The human spirit needs refreshment and renewal, and our wise creator provides for this.

I hope you can get away during this summer. I hope and pray that you will be blessed through that. I suspect you will be even more if you can spend some of that time consciously seeking God's renewal and re-energising in your life.

With best wishes  
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