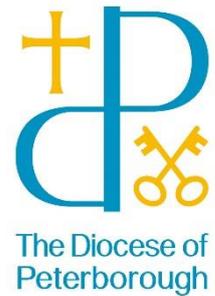


## BISHOP'S BULLETIN No 9

### To the Licensed Clergy of Peterborough Diocese

28 April 2020



Dear friends

#### **Generosity in covid times**

Some of our parishes (I don't know which, as I do my best to keep out of the details in matters of finance) have written to our diocesan finance team, saying that they have some reserves, and offering to pay their whole year's parish share in one go to help us with our current cashflow issues. **Thank you** to whichever parishes have acted so generously!

The wheels turn slowly, but it eventually occurred to me that this sets a brilliant example for our personal giving to the church and other good causes. If we have enough in reserve, we could do the same, and give the whole (or the remainder) of our annual tithe now, to help the recipients in their undoubted cashflow problems. It's just a thought.

Then, if you have been able to do such a thing, you could commend the idea to parishioners. One good outcome of this dreadful pestilence might be a change of culture, by which large numbers of people paid their bills on receipt rather than late, gave their tithe on the first day rather than the last day, and used money to make friends and create goodwill, rather than holding onto it. Is that just wishful thinking, or is it kingdom economics?

#### **Launde Abbey**

Another thought, provoked by recent events. I've just had to postpone a booking at Launde Abbey. We were taking the ordinands on retreat as usual before the ordinations in late June. We hope that somehow the ordinations will take place, but I'm as sure as I can be that the normal residential retreat just won't be possible at that stage. Although I have booked a different retreat later this year, Launde will still be losing money over this. Most of their staff are furloughed, but they have very significant standing costs, and will be suffering financially through the covid-19 crisis. That is particularly tough when they have worked so hard in recent years and successfully got their finances onto an even keel.

I wonder, when we are able to use Launde again, whether a good number of us might quite deliberately book retreats or gatherings there, simply to help them recover some of what they have lost? Launde is a great place for spiritual refreshment, and a few days there could make up a bit for missed holidays, or could help PCCs or leadership teams or choirs or music groups re-bond after a time of separation. I'm just thinking aloud (and haven't been put up to it by our friends at Launde!)

### **Vocations Sunday - 3 May**

This coming Sunday is set aside in the Church's calendar as Vocations Sunday – a day to help people especially think about God's call on their lives. We have often thought of it as a day to focus upon how the Lord might be calling particular people to serve in the authorised ministries of the Church. That remains so. You will have noticed, I am sure, certain people displaying an aptitude for ministry and maturity of faith during these unusual times. Please do, this coming weekend, encourage such people to look at the pages on our diocesan website which introduce:

- Ordination  
<https://www.peterborough-diocese.org.uk/ordained-ministry/ordained-ministry>
- Lay Ministry  
<https://www.peterborough-diocese.org.uk/licensed-lay-ministry/licensed-lay-ministry-1>
- Stories of people who have explored their calling  
<https://www.peterborough-diocese.org.uk/vocation-voices/vocation-voices>

The National Church website <https://www.churchofengland.org/life-events/vocations> also has a lot of useful information.

The first vocation for all Christians, of course, is to know and follow Jesus. It is good that much more attention is being paid also to being an every-day disciple. The **EveryDay Faith** project has some really helpful resources to help us inspire people to live lives of service at work, at home and in our neighbourhood. Take a look at <https://www.churchofengland.org/about/renewal-reform/setting-gods-people-free/everyday-faith> and you will find some interesting things, not only for this Sunday but also to grow discipleship in the weeks to come.

With love in Christ

+ Donald

## **PS Spiritual resources for shut-ins**

Thank you so much to those who responded to my request for suggestions. Do dip in to whatever might be helpful.

### **Health and wellbeing**

- "Staying emotionally healthy in a time of crisis":  
<https://vimeo.com/408606553/c57b318601>
- [St Luke's](#) Virtual Clergy Wellbeing Programme
- Thoughts from a trauma-informed perspective.pdf (attachment)

### **Bible and Theology**

- [bibleproject.com](http://bibleproject.com): a comprehensive, accessible, contemporary biblical resource including thematic studies
- Church at home weekly teaching video, podcast and study:  
[https://bibleproject.com/church-at-home/?utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_source=newsletter&utm\\_campaign=quarantinemail&utm\\_content=wol#!](https://bibleproject.com/church-at-home/?utm_medium=email&utm_source=newsletter&utm_campaign=quarantinemail&utm_content=wol#!)
- Theological lectures from a range of contributors on a range of topics:  
<https://masterlectures.zondervanacademic.com/>  
(requires a subscription after the two week free trial)
- The Psalms - Lent Course.pdf (suitable outside Lent too! - attachment)

### **Recommended Books pertinent to this season of readjusting**

- [Walter Brueggemann : Sabbath as resistance](#)
- [John Mark Comer: the ruthless elimination of hurry](#)