

Reflections on Lent & Easter during Pandemic

I have experienced many Lents during my long life but never one like this. I have written of the Paschal Mystery always in the knowledge that resurrection follows the suffering but the resurrection never seemed to arrive last year, so what is God saying to us this year?

Traditionally, Lent is a time for penance, repentance, fasting and almsgiving. But we seem to have had a year of isolation, not seeing loved ones, maybe having a family member die and other hardships. What more are we expected to do? Perhaps the pandemic is an opportunity to spend Lent by focusing on the basic practices of our Christian faith. I can think of three ways of doing this but, being aware that you may not read this until Lent is over, they can be appropriate for any time when we feel the need for renewal of our spiritual life.

We can deepen our engagement with Scripture perhaps by setting aside some time each day to read, reflect and pray with a portion of Scripture, perhaps the Gospel of the day.

If we allow ourselves to be open to the prompting of the Holy Spirit we could be informed and challenged in new ways.



We can focus on prayer. In pandemic times we may not be able to worship together as we would normally do but we have a greater opportunity to renew and increase our relationship with God.

“ ... so what is God saying to us? ”

St Augustine tells us that God is closer to us than we are to ourselves. We can find that experience in prayer.

Almsgiving. Commonly seen as perhaps donating money to good causes but the pandemic maybe gives us a new perspective. It has opened the eyes of many of us to issues of things like loneliness and the importance of social interaction. We all have time to give to help our neighbour!

Lent always ends with Easter and the Resurrection and whilst we may still be under the cloud of Covid

this Easter the message of Christian hope is more important than ever. I'll end with a quote from Julian of Norwich "All shall be well, and all shall be well and all manner of thing shall be well".

Happy Easter - He is risen.

Frank Bowe



Goodbye but not Farewell

After 36 years in Otley and being part of Our Lady and All Saints we have decided to relocate and are now in Dorking in Surrey to be near family, our daughters and grandchildren.

We are grateful of this opportunity to let folk know and to say thank you.

The Church will be part of our story, from First Communion, to a wedding and sadly a number of family funerals we are grateful for the support of many. Otley had given us so much over the years, friendship, support, a community we have been excited to be engaged in, from soup lunches for CAFOD to the Hard Road, from taking communion to the sick to the history of the Irish in the town; we have had opportunities to engage and to meet people we will continue to cherish.

So ... as the road rises up to meet us, as the wind is at our back we would hope that we would remain, with you in the palm of His hand.

Maggie and Chris Power, Feb 2021



Easter 2021
Camino de Santiago
 -VIRTUAL CHALLENGE-
 walking 480 miles in the 40 days of Lent → this equates to 12 miles per day
 Your sponsorship will help us fund our COVID-19 projects, providing school equipment for remote learning and our feeding program in the Philippines - also SVP Leeds projects within the community.
 Please sponsor us by donating to
www.angelstorchildren.org.uk or through <https://caidonate.caionline.org/15896>
 For more info contact Beth Street at 07719785986
THANK YOU

Please pray for:

Baptisms

Harvey Benjamin Taylor

Harriet Elizabeth Banks

Anya Katherine Banks

Recently Deceased

James Macdonald

Rosanna Cunningham

Anne Wood

James Mangeolles

Harvey Johnstone

Vincent Burns

Vee Douglas

Paul Lovell

Richard Slowik

Catherine Black

Maureen Oliver

*Eternal rest grant unto them, O Lord,
and let perpetual light shine upon them.*

May they rest in peace.

Amen

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ParishQuarterly

Our Lady & All Saints Catholic Church, Otley

www.olasotley.org

EASTER 2021



Fr Lawrie's message for Easter

As we move into the second year of coming to terms with the Covid 19 pandemic the challenges we face seem to change on a regular basis. I thought that as an example of one who had to adapt to changing circumstances we could take St Joseph as our guide and companion.

Pope Francis has proclaimed a "Year of St Joseph".

In his Apostolic Letter entitled *Patris Corde* ("With a Father's Heart"), Pope Francis describes Saint Joseph as a beloved father, a tender and loving father, an obedient father, an accepting father; a father who is creatively courageous, a working father, a father in the shadows.

The Letter marks the 150th anniversary of Blessed Pope Pius IX's declaration of St Joseph as Patron of the Universal Church.

In his letter, Pope Francis notes how, "Every day, for over forty years, following Lauds [Morning Prayer]" he has "recited a prayer to Saint Joseph taken from a nineteenth-century French prayer book of the Congregation of the Sisters of Jesus and Mary." This prayer, he says, expresses devotion and trust, and even poses a certain challenge to Saint Joseph," on account of its closing words:

"My beloved father, all my trust is in you. Let it not be said that I invoked you in vain,

and since you can do everything with Jesus and Mary, show me that your goodness is as great as your power." At the conclusion of his Letter, he adds another prayer to St Joseph, which he encourages all of us to pray together:

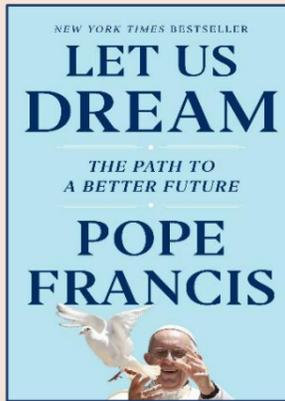
Hail, Guardian of the Redeemer, Spouse of the Blessed Virgin Mary. To you God entrusted his only Son; in you Mary placed her trust; with you Christ became man.

Blessed Joseph, to us too, show yourself a father and guide us in the path of life. Obtain for us grace, mercy, and courage, and defend us from every evil. Amen.

For us all as we prepare to meet the Risen Christ once again this Easter, perhaps we can go forward with the same faith and confidence as St Joseph, the one "who listened to God's word and stepping out into the unknown put it into practice". With every blessing for a Happy Easter to you and yours.

Father Lawrie





Let us Dream: a book review

Who could forget the Pope's momentous "Urbi et Orbi" message to a deserted St Peter's Square after Covid-19 effectively locked down the world, when he spoke of the need for change if we were to come out of the pandemic better rather than worse?

His passion to see a better world is perhaps the essence of "Let Us Dream" which reveals this passion, and the urgency that he clearly feels. In his encyclical letter "Laudato Si" ("On Care for Our Common Home") the Pope focuses on the harm humanity is inflicting on Mother Earth, urging action if we are to halt climate change, the damage we are causing to the land, to the air we breathe, to wildlife and indeed the whole eco system.

This book re-visits those concerns and emphasises the "earth's resources are being plundered". It makes a continuing plea to all of us, as well as to governments, to change the way we see life, how we see others, especially the marginalised, suggesting "the pandemic and the economic crisis offer a chance to examine our lifestyles" and that we "put the regeneration of the earth at the heart of our post-Covid future". The book virtually pleads for Change, from a governmental to an individual level: Francis urges change in the Catholic Church too by embracing the particular skills women have to offer: and throughout, the book exhorts the concept of fresh thinking on fraternity and "the common good".

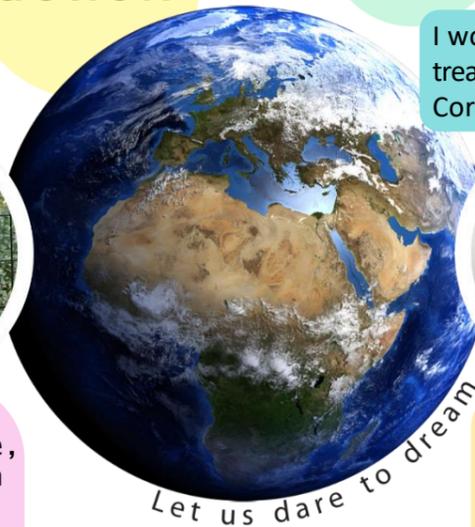
I found the book's intensity and passion challenging me on every page. There is a sadness too that disturbs but is rebuffed by positive messages, such as "We see an awakening, a call for change, a sense that what has been is not all there is to come". It's that "awakening" that leads to the question the Pope puts to us all in the closing pages ... "And now, what must I do?". **Joe McGuinness**

*I would like to see people reaching out more often to meet family, friends or those they know to be living alone, because we never know when we will see them again especially when something like Covid-19 happens in the future. I would like to see more handwashing facilities in every public space possible like schools, shopping areas, hospitals and bus stops. I would like to see more reminders and tips to people to wash their hands properly to help stop the spread of more virus in the future. I would like to see people listening and following the rules in a selfless kind of way, not just to keep themselves safe, but also to keep others safe, even the ones they do not know. **Philippa Cowell***



During lockdown, I noticed dramatic changes in the amount of cars on the roads and aeroplanes travelling in the sky. Because of this change, our air and seas are much cleaner and less polluted. This was shown in images of India and China at the start of lockdown compared to the start of 2019, and images of the canals in Venice at the start of lockdown compared to what they normally look like. Fish were even seen in the canals of Venice for the first time in many years! The change was incredible, the air was so much clearer as there was less dust and pollutants circulating.

Things that we should take out of lockdown include; taking better care of our planet, appreciating the little things in life more, such as seeing family, friends and socialising. In addition to this, we should think more about respecting the needs of others and helping each other out where possible. **Niamh Casey**



CARE FOR OUR COMMON HOME

LET US DREAM

action

change

a future for all

lifestyle changes

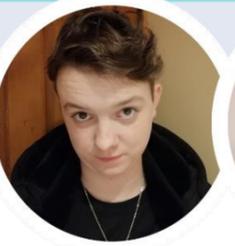
Covid

One of the many things lockdown has taught me, is the value of change. Alongside the value of change, lockdown has reminded me of how integral people are to life, be they friends, family, or those acquaintances you bump in to every now and again. People brighten up the world! During the pandemic, we have all been disconnected from the special places and people we love. But amidst the suffering and dramatic lifestyle changes we have all made, we have found hope in one another. I think the experience of lockdown has brought us back to our roots, bridging gaps in the community that isolated people from their differences. As society begins to return to a new 'normal', I am hoping that humans do not lose the value we hold in one another. I'm hoping that the change in community spirit will continue into the post-Covid era. I believe we all have the opportunity to change our world, and sometimes something as small as a kind word or action is at the heart of change. **Natalie O'Shea**

During the Coronavirus pandemic I have witnessed wonderful acts of kindness. Some small and some much larger! Personally, I think we do not need to change our current attitude as a community. Throughout this past year, despite all the troubles we have collectively faced, I feel as though the world has become closer. This has occurred despite us all being at our most isolated points in our lives. What I hope for in the future is this ... the new attitude which we have developed and nurtured, should continue to be carried forward into the coming months and years. As a world, I hope we can persevere to be united and face further challenges together. Drastic changes are required to reverse some of our destructive nature towards the environment and other threats which face us on a global scale. What is important is to care for our common man. Pope Francis in his Lenten message said 'It is a time for renewing faith, hope and love.' **William Roberts**

My dream for the future is one of insight. In the months during the pandemic, there have been many words of action - to "build," to "reinvest," to "overcome." What has been neglected is where those actions come from. Insight offers the gift on intentionality - that which guides our actions. This year, I'll be re-affirming what I hope to achieve through cultivating insight. I hope our world leaders seek the same. **Sheeana Street**

I would dream of a world where everyone is equal and there was no discrimination or unequal treatment of people. A world that has managed to change and become better at helping the environment. Coronavirus would be gone as it has affected too many people in a negative way. **Jasmine Voller**



It is widely accepted that various developing countries lack the necessities needed for a comfortable life; for many places, clean water, sanitation and even food is not a given for everyone. For example, it is estimated that around the world, up to 443 million school days are lost every year because of water-related illnesses; this is a substantial amount of lost education due to a problem that could be fixed with adequate funding and directly addressing the issue. Although gradually we are bettering the world, innumerable lives are being lost in the process. If we continue to use our privilege to raise money and awareness for this cause, we could finally fix this problem. However, time is running out - we must act fast to secure a prosperous future for all. **Eliza Street**

I would dream of a world where dreams and hopes come true for every living thing and where our imagination can become real life. In my imagination I think of everyone being happy and rich so they have enough money so no one is poor or homeless or starving in the whole world. I hope that coronavirus vanishes forever, never ever able to come back! **Isaac Voller**

Recreate the world
Creator God, Because of your abundant love you chose to bring light and order into the formless void, to create a world of unsurpassed beauty and you saw that it was good. We ask that you continue to recreate the world with that same attentive love, to bring light into today's ever increasing chaos and darkness where we have failed to be stewards and carers of your creation. Replenish our hearts so that we too can renew the face of the earth. **Amen**

CAFOD Catholic Agency for Overseas Development
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What do I dream of? I dream of a world where I can grow up and have my own family in a world that feels safe and everyone is treated equally and diseases are cured quickly. I hope that my children and grandchildren can live in a world full of peace. **Heather Voller**