



St Mary the Virgin Baldock



“Building with Christ”

Rector's Blog – day 30

Dear Friends

Today, something about the effects of Lockdown on our emotions before we return to Jonah and Jesus tomorrow

Jeremiah chapter 38: 5,6

5King Zedekiah said, 'Here he is; he is in your hands; for the king is powerless against you.' 6So they took Jeremiah and threw him into the cistern of Malchiah, the king's son, which was in the court of the guard, letting Jeremiah down by ropes. Now there was no water in the cistern, but only mud, and Jeremiah sank in the mud.

For some of us enduring self-isolation is full of potential rather than much of a burden. More time to do things we usually have to rush. Less obligations. And even, often, minimal disruption.

If you are in this situation, there are three things to remember. The first is to be thankful. Every day! Verbally! Out loud! The second is to consider the vast swathes of the population who are not as fortunate. Those worried for their livelihood or their families. Those who are lonely. People traumatised with mental health issues or those who are in danger at home. And in remembering, try to be active rather than passive and to do something that will make a difference to someone in these categories, even if it is only donating to a relevant charity.

The third is slightly more subtle. I have become more aware that even for those who are using lockdown as 'opportunity' and are feeling few ill effects, there is an insidious result creeping in. As our horizons reduce it is common to slip into a sort of tunnel vision where little things matter more. Because we have less contact with people outside our four walls, our own self-importance grows and we can forget to consider how our responses affect others. Arguments and sharp words result in feeling aggrieved rather than being generous or big-minded. And the 'delights' of lockdown transform into a feeling of being enclosed as we sink into the mud.

Jeremiah in the well becomes our experience as we slip into the slough of despond and gaze at the light at the top of the cistern far above us. If this is your experience, and you are beginning to feel a little more tetchy or put upon than usual, take a step back and look at the root causes which may be more to do with the situation in which you find yourself rather than the anything to do with individual personalities, yours or anyone else's.

And hold onto the fact that faith in Christ promises new hope after the experience of abandonment and frustration. And give thanks again!

PS If you want to know what happened to Jeremiah next, read to the end of the chapter.

If you noticed a reference to Pilgrim's Progress in the comment above, here is a hymn you will enjoy!

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mkM4FK6O0cQ>

And today's prayer

A prayer for times of isolation

'For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come... will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.' (Romans 8:38-39)

God of heaven and earth,
in these times of isolation,



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apart from loved ones
distant from friends
away from neighbours
thank you that there is nothing
in all of creation,
not even coronavirus,
that is able to separate us from your love.

And may your love that never fails
continue to be shared
through the kindness of strangers
looking out for each other,
for neighbours near and far
all recognising our shared vulnerability,
each of us grateful for every breath,
and willing everyone to know the gift
of a full and healthy life.
Keep us all in your care.
Amen.

If you would like to join us for Evening Prayer today (Thursday) it is at 5.00pm
The link is

Topic: Evening Prayer Zoom on Thursday
Time: Apr 30, 2020 05:00 PM London

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85071103596?pwd=SUdheWNRU3ZWb1NjdFJIN2d1Qm91Zz09>

Meeting ID: 850 7110 3596
Password: 000662

The times for Evening Prayer for the rest of the week are as follows:

Friday 5.00pm (contact Katrina)
Saturday 5.00pm
Sunday 6.00pm

Every blessing

Andrew