

## NEWSLETTER 49

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or use the links at the bottom of the page.

The Parish Church of  
**St Werburgh**  
Spondon



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### This week Sunday March 7th

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<b>Sunday</b>	<b>10am</b>	<b>Parish Mass online</b>
	<b>11.30am</b>	<b>Join Father Julian for Coffee see the link in- newsletter</b>
	7.30pm	Safe Space Mental Health talk – {contact Fr J for the Zoom Link
<b>Monday</b>	10am	Morning Prayer on zoom (contact Rev. Cath for the link)
<b>Tuesday</b>	10am	Morning Prayer on zoom (contact Rev. Cath for the link)
	7.30pm	Tuesday Evening Talking Heads online Fr J and Rev Sarah talk about 'how Lockdown has affected many in our community.
<b>Wednesday</b>	10am	Morning Prayer on zoom (contact Rev. ath for the link)
	10.30am	Mass online
	8pm	Compline online
<b>Thursday</b>	10am	Morning Prayer on zoom (contact Rev. Cath for the link)
	7pm	Mass online
	8pm	Isaiah its history and context (contact Fr J for Zoom link)
<b>Friday</b>	10am	Morning Prayer on ZOOM (contact Rev. Cath for the link)
<b>Saturday</b>	4.30pm	Stations of the Cross online
<b>Sunday</b>	<b>10am</b>	<b>Parish Mass online</b>

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### Prayer list:

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For Mike recovering at home after his stroke, for Mary and all the family keeping the farm going. For Tina & Michael, Jean & Barry, John Morris, Jean, and her son Andrew with COVID. Cath undergoing cancer treatment. For Fiona's Aunty Roz.

For all those who have tested positive this week and those suffering with long COVID

For everyone going back in to school this week.

For Phyllis who is 90 on Monday!!!!

For all those working in the NHS and for Shirley and all those administering the vaccines.

RIP - Colin Ufton, Derek Thomas, David Withey.

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## This Sunday's Gospel reading: John 1.13-20

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The Passover of the Jews was near, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem. In the temple he found people selling cattle, sheep, and doves, and the money-changers seated at their tables. Making a whip of cords, he drove all of them out of the temple, both the sheep and the cattle. He also poured out the coins of the money-changers and overturned their tables. He told those who were selling the doves, 'Take these things out of here! Stop making my Father's house a market-place!' His disciples remembered that it was written, 'Zeal for your house will consume me.' The Jews then said to him, 'What sign can you show us for doing this?' Jesus answered them, 'Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up.' The Jews then said, 'This temple has been under construction for forty-six years, and will you raise it up in three days?' But he was speaking of the temple of his body. After he was raised from the dead, his disciples remembered that he had said this; and they believed the scripture and the word that Jesus had spoken.

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## Rev Kate's reflection on the Gospel

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Our Gospel this morning left me with an image of chaos and to use the words of our collect, of the debris which so often gets in the way of our relationship with God. Into that space Jesus arrives, disrupting and challenging, driving all that gets in the way of God out of the temple.

How relevant that is to us today. God turns over tables and we are all trying to figure out what it all means to our lives and our future.

This Gospel challenges our understanding of where we find God. One thing we have learned from this past year – and that Jesus makes clear – is that the church is not the building. The temple of the body of Christ is all of us, whether the small number here in church or all of you joining us online.

In this past year, we have been forced to learn new ways of reconnecting, new ways of being church – and it has been tough, it has been disruptive. We're mostly running on empty. But God's divine presence is not in a building or structure. It is everywhere. It is in Jesus and the gift of death and resurrection. God lives among us, the Word made flesh. But what can so often get in the way is our own personal debris. The walls we build in our heart. The tables we pile up with our rubble - and push up against doors to prevent them from being opened. What is the worst that could happen if those doors were flung open? What does God need to overturn in your life?

Lockdown Lent is hard and this week I have, as Fr Julian suggested last week, been trying to drag my cross out into the open and turn those tables over. For me, as I have said this before, it is my need to be in control of everything and to know exactly what is going to happen – that's my usual default position when I'm wracked by feelings of uncertainty about what the future might look like – or even how long that future might be, rather than being grateful for the God given gift of life, of breath, in every single moment of the day. In the meantime, I let the debris, the rubble of regret, of the need for everything to be perfect clutter up my life and get in the way of the God who sees us all through eyes of unconditional love.

For the money changers in the temple in our Gospel reading, it's very much business as usual. This is how things are done, turning religion into a transactional relationship... but what is the worst that could happen if you simply said an unqualified 'yes' to God today – to embrace all that God has for you -to let God show you the way through the debris? It is a question I ask myself most days. Jesus doesn't try and turn us into someone we're not. He reminds us of who we have always been and calls us back to that.

Speaking for myself, it's all easy to become disoriented in labyrinths of anxiety we can sometimes create for ourselves, tunnels that we stumble and weave our way through, because we try to fix things, when sometimes the only way is to walk along the abyss, knowing that God is with us.

As we tread carefully through Lent these words from Oscar Romero, the martyred Archbishop of San Salvador may speak to you ....*“Let us not measure the church by the numbers of its members or by its material buildings. ... - What matters is you, the people, your hearts, God’s grace giving you truth and life. .... Measure yourselves by the sincerity of heart with which you follow the truth and light of our divine Redeemer ”*

In these next few weeks .... together as the body of Christ... let's allow the sacred space in the temple of our hearts for God to demolish walls and open locked doors. As we know, change is challenging, it is painful, it is messy, but God always brings life from the ashes and the debris of our lives.

Allow Jesus to drive out what we no longer need. To turn over the tables. Give thanks for the grace of God which gives us truth and life.

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## Zoom and Coffee on Sunday link:

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**Hi everyone if you would like to join me for a coffee at 11.30am on Sunday**

(password shouldn't be needed but if asked it is: Passcode: 062867)

**Here is the Zoom Link:**

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85228570388?pwd=VEFaQTFnWWhhNzVDSVVFdFJEUUh0Zz09>



**Sunday 7.30pm Safe Space Mental Health Talk** Contact Fr J for Zoom Link

**Tuesday Talking Heads 7.30pm online**  
This week Julian and Sarah will talk about how lockdown has affected many in our community.

**Wednesday 10.30am Mass & 8pm Compline online**

**Thursday after 7pm Mass 8pm Isaiah - Context and History.** Fr J

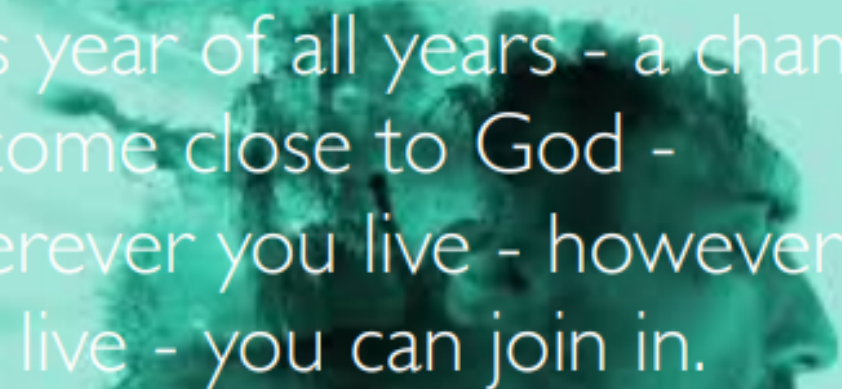
leads a discussion and offers a history of the period(s) in which the Book of Isaiah came to be formed. Ask Fr J for the Zoom Link.

**Saturday 4.30pm Stations of the Cross online.**

Website: [www.stwerburgh.com](http://www.stwerburgh.com) | Facebook: [@StWerburghSpondon](https://www.facebook.com/StWerburghSpondon) | email: [stwhelps@gmail.com](mailto:stwhelps@gmail.com)

# Online Holy Week Retreat

Palm Sunday afternoon to Holy Saturday, 28th March -3rd April



This year of all years - a chance  
to come close to God -  
wherever you live - however  
you live - you can join in.

Get in touch ASAP only a few places left

This year our retreat is planned to take place online and is accessible to everyone. There is no cost.

Its fits around your job, family and commitments with your own individual guide. A chance to pray, to explore life questions, to discern how God is working in your life, simply to get some space..... flexible, individually focussed, you make it whatever you want it to be.

This Holy Week, we invite you to go deeper.  
Come and join in...contact Fr J in confidence if you want to know more or book a place.

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## A letter from the frontline:

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As you have by now likely heard we are in the midst of a pandemic, and have been for nigh on a year. In this period I have worked in several

different roles — as an emergency logistics coordinator, major incident resilience planner, and pastoral healthcare advisor — and have deployed as an emergency medical technician on frontline ambulances throughout. In this latter role, I have recently found myself working in Cornwall, assisting the South Western Ambulance Service Trust's response to the pandemic. It is in a Travelodge in this far-flung Duchy that I come to write this short piece, having just finished my fourth of seven 12-hour shifts.

Covid-19 only really hit the South West Peninsula in December 2020, but since then it has sadly spread like wildfire, sowing fear, misery, and loss in its wake. Those of us who worked in harder-hit areas (like the East Midlands) earlier in the pandemic have found ourselves ideally placed

and equipped to offer advice and support on both operational and strategic levels to those organisations which are only recently bearing the brunt of the viral blitz. Although it is an absolutely wonderful part of the world in which to spend time (particularly as it reminds me of the Gower and Pembrokeshire peninsulas of my beautiful home, Gwalia — each a glorious affirmation of God's Creation, even on a drizzly day), at present Cornwall's sun-kissed beaches, glittering coastal waters, and gently rolling hills serve only to momentarily misdirect one's gaze from the community's continuing suffering, with which many of us have sadly grown all too familiar over the past twelve months:

Unemployment rises, businesses continue to fold, and the term "furlough" has become for many synonymous with "purgatory".

The region's ambulance service regularly "holds" (i.e. has no vehicle to allocate) in excess of forty calls at any one time, whilst GP practices and community care services are working longer, more intense hours than ever before.

Hospitals are bursting at the seams, with no capacity to treat existing patients, let alone receive new.

Ministers of religion, funeral directors, and diverse associated staff are stretched to breaking point, often operating in isolation (medical or otherwise) and behind closed doors.

Despite Boris Johnson's recent announcements of a "Lockdown Exit Roadmap", the encouraging downward trend in virus prevalence rates, and an absolutely astounding NHS vaccination campaign, nobody should make the mistake of presuming that things will be plain sailing from hereon out.

**I would beg everyone to continue to love thy neighbour by actions as straightforward as maintaining social distancing, hand-washing, and mask-wearing.**



I have on several occasions returned to families which the coronavirus has ripped apart, again and again, simply because they couldn't resist that communal barbecue, or "just nipped in for a coffee". Avoid the temptation to visit extended family and friends — we have waited this long for reunion and should endeavour to hold out just that bit longer.

Finally, if offered the opportunity, please get "the jab(s)", regardless of which "flavour" you are offered (currently Oxford/AstraZeneca and Pfizer, with Moderna's offering to follow later in the spring) — any protection offered is better than none, and the data for each is tremendously encouraging. There are many of us working frontline who are yet to be offered the vaccine, and one of the best things anyone can do to help us, themselves, and one another, is to accept the offer when it comes — please. In short, let us be excellent to each other, and we shall endure.

This Lent I am making a conscious effort to balance the season's traditional emphasis on sin, repentance, and mortality with consideration of St. Paul's words in Romans 5:19 ("For just as by the one man's disobedience the many were made sinners, so by the one man's obedience the many will be made righteous."), and to have faith that, whilst sin exists, so does hope: hope for deliverance from suffering, loss, and death, and for new life. This is my prayer this Lent; for myself and for all.

Rhodri

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## From Bishop Libby

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Bishop-designate Malcolm and I are hosting 'Lent Hope' through March (an hour of reflection on scripture and prayer on Monday mornings and repeated on Thursday evenings – you are welcome to join us: see the diocesan website or email [halina.johnson@bishopofderby.org](mailto:halina.johnson@bishopofderby.org) for the zoom link).

However insurmountable our circumstances may feel, however small and limited our resources may seem, God has come to us with the promise of an everlasting covenant – secured not just by a rainbow or a family line, but by the blood of Jesus, his death and resurrection – which is good news, for all.

Such love without restraint gives us hope to face whatever comes, and love without measure – for His sake.

+Libby

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## Some Dos and Don'ts for our online Worship.

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We have had some modifications made to the sound system in church following the comments last week - this was particularly with regard to those people for whom sound was distorted or very unclear. This problem affected some mobile phones and iPads. So let's have a go again this week!!

May I suggest a good rule of thumb with regards our participation through the comments at online Mass is - if it isn't something you'd say during Mass then don't put it in the chat!

### So, **DO**

- Say hello and greet everybody
- Join in the responses and the liturgy
- Type your prayers for people and situations
- Laugh at Fr J's jokes (obviously!)
- Just ignore anyone who puts a criticism or negative comment
- Never respond privately if it appears someone you don't know is wanting information.
- Engage with the sermon / teaching
- Encourage the kids when they take part remembering all of them

### **DON'T**

- Comment or criticise (very happy to receive constructive criticism but via email or a phone call afterwards rather than during the service please as it affects everybody watching)
- Have a private chat - you can text someone or call someone separately if you want but if you put it in the public chat on the screen it distracts everyone
- Try not to pick individuals out to thank or for special praise (unless it's the kids) - Fr J or whoever is celebrating will name and thank everyone each week. It is really really important we remember our worship is not a performance!

Basically, don't type it on the screen if it isn't something you'd say publicly at church as the messages are a beautiful part of our worship.

**Lastly - hit the 'share' button and repost on your timeline...or share to Twitter etc... that's called *evangelism* and it's how social media works.**

## Photos: Pets, Play & Signs of Spring



Bea and Gaby home schooling



Dora with her pet snails



Alexis enjoying a walk at Morley



William and Edward ready for world book day



Nina playing in the mud kitchen

