

Stay Safe and Blessed by Reverend Cath Atkinson

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Dear friends,

I wonder how you have found these past days? Strange? A little bit scary?

We've had crowded shops and panic buying, we've searched for hand sanitiser, we've 'stayed safe and stayed home', and we've started to learn to live differently.

We are now appreciating and applauding those we might once have taken for granted – shop workers, delivery companies, NHS workers and of course our medical staff working so hard for the benefit of all of us.

We are now connecting with loved ones, households spending time together, families learning from each other.

There is less frenetic doing, people rushing around on jobs that must be done, trying to beat the clock. Suddenly the pace has slowed – we are able to complete tasks more intentionally.

We are taking care of our bodies – walking or exercising, and we are allowing the earth to breathe without traffic, planes and constant movement.

We are still...

Jesus said, 'unless a grain of wheat falls to the ground and dies, it does not produce fruit.'

Maybe it was time for modern life to die back in order to produce a different kind of fruit.

The fruit of intentional kindness, the fruit of valuing each other, the fruit of loving our neighbour.

We are coming towards the end of Lent, and all the events of Holy week – of Jesus riding into Jerusalem – a King riding on a humble donkey; of a last meal with his friends; of anguished prayers in a garden as he faced what lie ahead; of his death and resurrection. We remember how Jesus offered himself for the life of the world, willing to walk the path of suffering and death, that we might know God's love. Love for each one of us.

On Good Friday he was crucified, and laid in a grave but the story doesn't end there – out of this death new life was born. Jesus rose from the dead reminding us that death is never the end. Which is why on Easter day we can shout Alleluia!

Out of death comes new life!

Praying you and yours have a safe and blessed Easter Season.

Your friend and minister

Cath

"For God so loved the world, that He gave His only son, that who 'ever believes in Him will" not die but have eternal life." (John 3:16)