

Curate's Letter – March 2020

Dear Friends,

This month heralds the arrival of spring. I wonder if you have a spring in your step. Each year, it surprises me how much more vibrant I feel as the days get brighter and longer, and winter at last turns its back on us.



It is all so easy to underestimate the effect of the seasons on our minds and bodies. In this time of artificial light and perpetual forward motion, we are easily seduced into believing that we are limitless creatures. Rest is optional; solitude is foolish; vulnerability is a weakness. The mantra of the age seems to be: *work hard, play hard, you can sleep when you're dead.*

Lent is a robust challenge to this idea of life without limits. Beginning from the poignant words on Ash Wednesday, remember you are dust and to dust you shall return, Lent is a time to remember that we have a beginning and ultimately an ending. In the forty days, we connect again with our vulnerability, our frailty, and our own mortality. We have limits, and we are at our most human when we can acknowledge them and respect them, rather than living in opposition to them.

As I write, I am conscious that this will be my last Curate's Letter before I go on maternity leave in April. Pregnancy has been a time of discovering these limits that change with each trimester. It has been a wonderful, sometimes challenging but mostly very humbling time. Perhaps you too are facing changes in life where you are encountering that your limits are changing. Maybe you are grieving, ill or caring for those who are unwell, changes that have left you feeling out of sorts, unlike the 'you' you once were.

I am comforted by how God comes to be with us, as we are, not as the people we would like to be. In Christ, God becomes human and lives a human life to the full. And yet this fullness doesn't look like ignoring these limits, but rather engaging with them: Christ has needs for company, solitude, prayer and he makes time for these things. Where others might see him as vulnerable, we see that his vulnerability is the pathway to new life. He is vulnerable when he weeps at the tomb of his friend – this compassion is not negated even when he is about to raise Lazarus. He is vulnerable when he is left alone by his closest friends in his hours of need, but he restores them so graciously and gently. He is vulnerable when he dies a criminal's death on the cross, but he brings new life to us all through his death and resurrection. Christ's life gives us a pattern of what it means to be truly human.

I wonder what would happen if we embraced our limits more readily? Perhaps, as we give up trying to transcend them, we might encounter more of God's transcendent power in our day-to-day lives.

With love,

Rachel

Previous copies of Rector's/Curate's Letter

[February 2020](#)

[Dec 2019-Jan 2020](#)

[November 2019](#)

[October 2019](#)

[Aug-Sept 2019](#)

[July 2019](#)

[June 2019](#)

[May 2019](#)

[April 2019](#)

[March 2019](#)

[February 2019](#)

[Dec 2018/Jan 2019](#)

[November 2018](#)

[October 2018](#)