



Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

We learned a couple of days ago as widely expected that the current lock down has been extended for a further three weeks, in order to restrain the spread of Coronavirus, protect the staff in the NHS and our care homes and save lives. In this first phase of this lockdown we will have all found ways of living with these restrictions and managing our time and no doubt many of us will both understand why we need to do this but we may also be frustrated by the restrictions imposed on our freedoms. I expect like me you have been deeply moved by the truly heroic effort of Captain Tom Moore who decided he would try and complete 100 laps of his garden before his 100th Birthday and so he set out to raise ± 1000 for the NHS charities. Well thanks to the generosity of people throughout the land and even across the world Tom completed his challenge on Friday but he has kept going and when I checked on Saturday his just giving total was over £20million! Captain Toms heroic effort and charming personality have captivated the nation - well done. As a church we have tried new ways of engaging with one another using modern ways of communications and I have had messages from people expressing their thanks and some have come from far afield. For the first few weeks we had the focus of Lent, Holy Week and Easter to keep us going now we are entering a more consistent time and this will bring its own challenges. We also still have to function as a Church community, we still

have to pay our bills even though our buildings are closed a major part of our income from our weekly collections has now dried up. So over the coming weeks a certain amount of our focus will be on the business of running our parishes. I was speaking to some friends who work in hospitals and one of their major concerns is that people aren't going to the hospitals like they used to with the normal everyday health issues - probably for fear of the Covid-19 virus so when they do see people their condition is usually worse. So if you need any support or help from us as a Church community please don't hesitate to get in touch - we are here for you and are praying for you every day. In our Gospel for this Sunday (John 20:19-end) it was the first day of Easter and we hear that the disciples themselves were locked in because they were fearful - but Jesus doesn't abandon them, instead he comes to them in the midst of their fear and stands amongst them bringing them his peace. This last week we have been reflecting on who do we say that Jesus is and I expect his own disciples were having similar thoughts especially Thomas who wasn't there on that Easter night. But then a week later they were still in lockdown and fearful and Jesus once again returns bringing his peace and Thomas was there and saw him for himself which led Thomas to declare: him, 'My Lord and my God!' then Jesus said to him, 'Have you believed because you have seen me? Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have come to believe.' Brothers and sisters may we believe in the risen Christ without the proof that Thomas required and may we hear the voice of Christ blessing us with the gift of his peace in these troubles times.

> With love & prayers. Michael (Rector) Tel: 01772 600548 mobile: 07960309005, email: <u>revmwoods@gmail.com</u>



Coronavirus Village support groups

Croston	COVID-19 Croston Village Support Group
Mawdesley	Mawdesley - Coronavirus help each other out.
Bretherton	Via Bretherton WI (01772 601495)
	email bethertoonwi@btinternett.com

Facebook Pages

There will be a **Worship Video on Sunday mornings at 10 am** and during the week there will be worship every day at 7 pm using the night prayer resource on the Church of England Website at:

https://www.churchofengland.org/prayer-and-worship/join-us-servicedaily-prayer

Or you can download the 'Daily Prayer' App to your phone or tablet.

https://www.facebook.com/St-John-the-Baptist-Church-Bretherton-439088266487676/

https://www.facebook.com/StMichaelAllAngelsChurchCroston/

https://www.facebook.com/St-Peters-Mawdesley-w-Bispham-442669382795886/?ref=bookmarks

Please continue to support the Food Banks

We need tinned & packet food, Tea, coffee, cereals.

We urgently need long-life (UHT) milk.

Specially needed is 'instant' food

- items that can be mixed with boiling water to make a meal.

(mashed potato, couscous, noodles, packet soups etc)

Many people cannot afford to pay for fuel & dare only to boil a kettle.

In Croston - please bring items to 19, Highfield Rd or 32, Westhead Rd. The next run to the Food Bank is early morning - Monday 20th.

In Bretherton - The box will remain at the gate, 154 South Road.

Thank you to everyone for your support to date!

Resources - Easter

Attached to this email are:

1) The 3 readings for Easter Sunday that we would have on our normal pewsheet.

#EasterPilgrim: - This should continue through Easter (it might get renamed)

Daily reflections / resources will continue to be posted on Facebook.