

## A LETTER FROM THE VICAR

Dear members of St Oswald's,

Welcome to this week's mailing which looks set to become a replacement for the weekly Church pewsheet. I hope and pray that you are keeping safe, well and in good spirits. This Sunday, Palm Sunday, marks the start of Holy Week during which we specially remember the sufferings of the Lord Jesus. This year we do so even more acutely aware of the sufferings of the world which he came to share.

Although we may be physically separated, it is important that we remain united in prayer. I therefore encourage you to join with me and others in the opportunities for prayer and worship which will be provided each day in Holy Week on our YouTube channel (St Oswald's Croxley Green - <https://youtu.be/18QiQ9m2kcs> or on one of the other platforms listed below. Some of you may prefer a more traditional, paper-based approach and you may find helpful the attached "Praying Together but Separately" document from the Diocese. I am also attaching a useful document from the Church of England about "Spiritual Communion". Tony will be sending out to young families an email with ideas for children's activities on Good Friday. If you don't receive this, but would like to, please let Tony know ([tonybarton6@hotmail.com](mailto:tonybarton6@hotmail.com)). Do keep checking in for news and encouragement on the Church website and Facebook page, and my own Rev Robert page too. The Church FB page will feature another story from Auntie Julie at 10am on Monday in what is becoming a popular regular slot. Do tune in then. Finally, don't forget the services broadcast on the BBC, both locally and nationally.

As well as challenges to health, many people are facing economic and financial challenges. That is true of churches as well. At St Oswald's we have lost some of our regular income, especially that from the Hall. It may be that some of you are compelled to cut back on your giving to St Oswald's and that is quite understandable. However, there may be others who are in a position to make additional contributions or who, unable to make their regular offering in church, are nevertheless able to make use of internet banking. For that purpose, the Church's bank account details are: St Oswald's PCC, 20-91-79, 50028630. Let's not forget the needs of others too. Donations can be left for the Croxley Foodbank at the Baptist Church between 1pm and 3pm on Mondays.

I continue to feel bowled over by all that members of the congregation are doing for one another and their neighbours by keeping in touch and helping in practical ways. In particular, I should like to express thanks and appreciation to the Churchwardens, Treasurer and all those who have been so busy in recent days facilitating our communications. As I mentioned in my letter last week, our Archbishops have said, we shall need to become a “different sort of church” in the coming months. That is clearly happening at St Oswald’s but largely by building on the faith, love and commitment we have shared in the past.

May God keep you safe and well and may this Holy Week be a pathway to Easter joy for you all,

Robert

### **INTERCESSIONS**

Please remember in your prayers: Paula Timmins, Fr. Philip Cross, Jean Langston, Alan Clifford, Tony Furr, Joan Morris, Pen Smith, Myra Banks, Debbie Clifford, Angela Sedgwick, David Muskett (recovering from Covid-19) and Ann Lisley (coping well with suspected Covid-19); also for our 10% mission giving recipients, facing particularly acute challenges at this time: USPG, CMS, Christian Solidarity Worldwide, ASCEND, Church Army Marylebone Project, Alternatives Newham, Watford Schools Trust and A Rocha.

### **Resources for Prayer and Celebration in Holy week and at Easter**

The Archbishop of Canterbury will publish a daily reflection on Facebook and his website.

The Church of England provides daily services with text and audio on its website:

<https://www.churchofengland.org/prayer-and-worship/join-us-service-daily-prayer>

The Diocese of Chelmsford have put together a good range of material for each day of Holy Week:

<https://www.chelmsford.anglican.org/holyweekathome>

Baptist minister, Nick Fawcett, has written an excellent e-book of prayers for the coronavirus crisis, "For Such a Time as This", available to download for free from his website:

<https://nickfawcett.uk/2020/03/27/free-e-book-of-coronavirus-prayers-out-now/>

Churches Together in Britain and Ireland have produced posters to display in home windows (including colouring in versions) and are encouraging people to sing hymns outside on Easter Day:

<https://ctbi.org.uk/prayers-of-hope/>

<https://ctbi.org.uk/sing-resurrection/>

There are helpful materials on the Church of England website for maintaining good mental health during lockdown:

<https://www.churchofengland.org/faith-action/mental-health-resources/supporting-good-mental-health/supporting-good-mental-health>