

Dear Parents, guardians, students & friends of St John's

Let me take this opportunity to welcome you all to the June edition of our Whole School Newsletter; I sincerely hope that you and your loved ones continue to stay safe and well.

This week has been a rather important week in the life of St John's as, following on from the most recent Government guidance, we have been able, once again, to welcome back groups of Year 10 and Year 12 students into the school for some academic lessons and for some face-to-face mentoring sessions. I have to say that it has been absolutely wonderful to see some of our pupils back in school after this long lay off and I have been incredibly impressed with their concentration and work ethic throughout the week; considering the long break they have had from school, their attitude to learning has been simply amazing. It also appears that our pupils have missed St John's too; now who would have thought that?!



*Year 12 Art students with Mrs Stone*

There are many challenges to coming back to school in the current pandemic, with one of the main ones being that we must ensure social distancing of 2 metres is in place at all times. As I am sure that you can imagine, this presents a great many problems for a school, from finding the space to cater for large groups of pupils in the first place, to checking the progress of students throughout the lesson. However, I am delighted to say that we have made an extremely positive start over these past five days and we will continue to adapt our practices to make the very best of this difficult situation.

On a slightly related note, I really do hope that the government soon allows us the flexibility to bring more year groups back before the summer break, as it would be fantastic to see an even greater number of our pupils return. I will be watching the government announcements very carefully over the coming weeks and will update you accordingly.

In the meantime, let me take this opportunity to wish you all the very best for the coming weeks and I do hope that you enjoy this latest edition of our Newsletter. Very well done to all the pupils who have got a mention!

Matt Barron  
Headteacher



*Year 10 English with Mrs Chambers & Miss Adamek*

## Home Learning Support

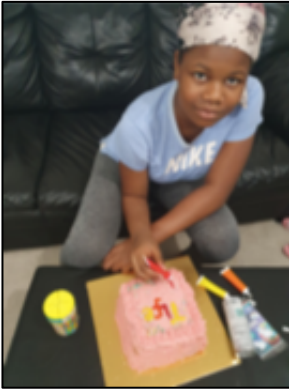
Please do not hesitate to contact your respective year team to support you with any home learning concerns.

Additionally, here are some websites to support with home learning:

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/teach/secondary/zkqp47h> - This is an excellent website covering topics in every subject in a really engaging way.

<https://www.edplace.com/> - You can sign up and receive five free activities a month.

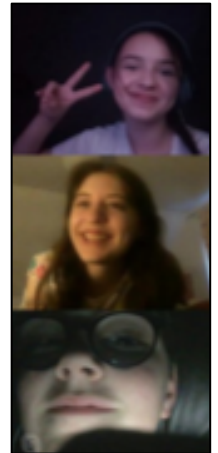
## Home Learning



### Year 7

Victoria B (7SDC) has been perfecting her baking skills by making and decorating this wonderful birthday cake for her little sister, who turned 2 just before the holidays. Happy belated birthday to your sister and well done for using this time to develop your skills.

Well done to Joseph G, Sophia B and Ciara B, who held a virtual sleep out to raise money for The House of Mercy. They stayed up all night camping in their front rooms! Between them they have managed to raise over £60. What an excellent example of the demonstration of care in the St. John's community. We are very proud of you all!



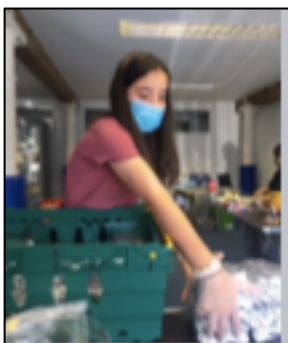
A special mention to Rebecca S (7OMP) who submitted some excellent photographs for the Photography competition. She has used the lovely weather we had over half term to showcase the natural beauty of the world around us! Well done.



Rebecca S (7OMP) and Amelia B (7OMP) have submitted more photos that they have gathered on their daily exercise. Rebecca's close-up of a flower and Amelia's tide-breakers, highlight once again the importance of protecting the world around us.



## Year 8



Skye G (8CRC) has been helping her church with an outreach initiative by providing lunches for families and sheltered housing residents in Gravesham. Skye has been packing the lunches and making the sandwiches since the initiative began at the start of lockdown. Thank you for all that you are doing to support our wider community Skye – a great example of 'Service to Others'.

Anna-Marie C (8CRC) was set an enrichment task from the RE Team to make or design something that would encourage her to go outside, enjoy the fresh air and appreciate nature. Anna-Marie decided to design a plant pot which focuses on all the different people who are currently helping others in the pandemic. What a thoughtful and imaginative idea, Anna- Marie – well done!



## Year 9



Reenie has designed a wonderful poster over the half term break for Miss Marchant; this is part of the RE curriculum looking at the Jewish festivals as part of the Jewish faith. A very well-presented piece of work and one that demonstrates an excellent attention to detail; keep up the hard work, Reenie!

Chloe (9AST) has created this lovely strawberry cheesecake for her food technology lesson. The cake is very well presented, with a very professional finish. Chloe has clearly been making the most of home learning with her name appearing regularly from teachers all who are wanting to praise her excellent A2L. Fantastic effort Chloe and keep up the good work.



## Nuffield Research Foundation

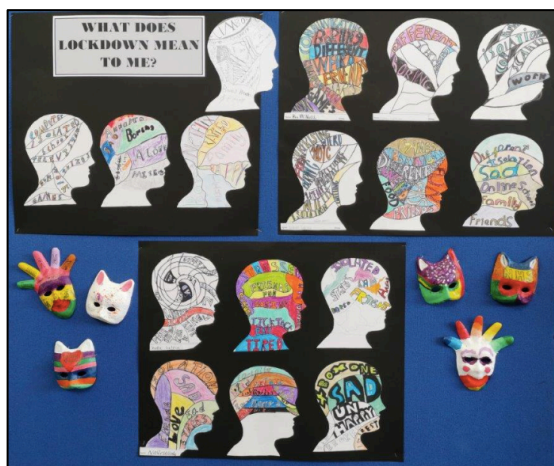
Congratulations to Healey T and Alice R from Year 12 who have secured a very prestigious placement with the Nuffield Research Foundation.

The research placement usually takes place face to face over a number of weeks in a lab based/University based setting, however due to COVID – 19 we are extremely grateful that the Nuffield Foundation have offered our students online/virtual placements. Healey will be working with a PhD student researching 'Vitamin K – could it be good for our brains?' and Alice will be researching 'Inflammation in the brain – what controls it?'

Again, we are very thankful for Nuffield and the University of Portsmouth for this opportunity.

Congratulations Alice and Healey on such a wonderful achievement.

Mrs N Ball. *Science Teacher*



## Lockdown Art

Pupils have enjoyed creating artwork inspired by 'Lockdown'. The pupils were asked "What does lockdown mean to you"? Pupils were encouraged to voice their frustrations and opinions and write these down to create their artwork. Materials included a template of an outline of a head, colouring pencils and permanent markers.

Mrs D Lal. *Art and Design Technician*

## Gurdwara

We are delighted that Jaspreet D from Year 12 is doing a tremendous service by volunteering at his local Gurdwara since the lockdown began. He has been delivering food parcels to the vulnerable people in the local community. This is a great act of 'Service to Others'. Keep up the excellent work!

Ms M Noor. *Business Studies Teacher*



## Literary Legends

Wow! What fantastic creative writing skills we have seen this term.

The following students have impressed with their creativity, thoughtfulness, and their story writing skills. A massive congratulations from the English Department, we look forward to hearing more stories from you!

Later that night, roughly around 9 O'clock, when the two sisters were sleeping, Eleanora, still awake, decided to go to bed. Tiredly, she slips her nightie on and collapses into bed. As she was just about to doze off, a loud deafening engine roared at the house. Blindingly, the shining, bright, yellow headlights glimmered through the house. As if a light bulb switched on inside of Eleanora, she ran towards her misty bedside window. Immediately, she recognized the dark navy Muntz car that was growling at the house. It was Victors!

Anisha A Year 7

I have arrived at the town of Slugsen. I am all alone. Hungry. Cold. Wanted and scared but I am here to start anew again. I jump down from the train and head to the exit to find somewhere to stay with the little money I have. I walk for roughly five minutes and I find a small abandoned cottage at the side of the road. Once I get to the door, I knock to make sure nobody is home. Nobody answers. So I gently push the door open and see an empty room. I place my bag on the floor and sit down with my phone on a search to find some high schools around the area. Many of the schools were full because it was the middle of the year, but there was one school that had a space left, [Winston school for boys and girls] so I decided to register myself and I got the place, so I went to sleep ready for what awaited me tomorrow in my new school.

Anu O Year 8

Crack! Thud! Squelch!

These were just some of the number of noises I had the misfortune of hearing that night when it happened... When he disappeared.

The wind howled and roared. Thunder cracked and whipped; rain hurled down on me. I was foolish to not have listened to them; all the signals they had given; me all the trees whispering to me; yet I failed to listen. This fault would cost me much more than I could afford.

Phelim H Year 7



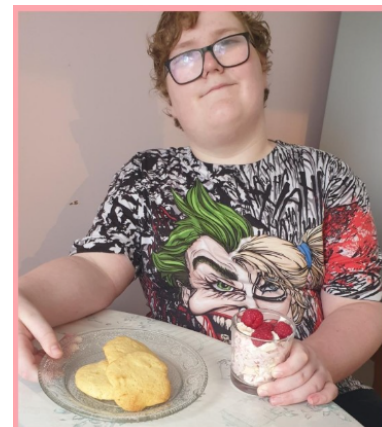
## Food and Nutrition STJ Cook Off – Winners!

Thank you to everybody who submitted an entry to the STJ Summer Cook Off Competition. We had some brilliant entries and it has been very difficult to judge. All those who entered will receive good comments and prizes will be awarded when we are back to school for our first Whole School Assembly.

**1<sup>st</sup> Prize goes to Owen Biggs - £20 Meal Voucher**

Owen made Eton Mess, making his own meringues and accompanying them with Dandelion and Lemon Cookies. We loved Owen's presentation and the originality of his recipe. Well done, Owen.

Mrs H Oatley. *Head of Food and Nutrition*



## Construction resumes at Ver-Sur-Mer site, Normandy Memorial



We are pleased to report that construction work at the site has now resumed after the two-month shutdown caused by the coronavirus epidemic. The contractors are working carefully with the French government's health and safety regulators.

It is now hoped that construction work will be completed in the late autumn. We will share more news about the formal opening of the Normandy Memorial in due course.

## Spitfire fly past for patron George Batts

On VE day 75, the Daily Mail's 'Salute the Heroes' Spitfire flypast, paid tribute to Veteran and Patron of the trust, George Batts. As the aircraft passed overhead, the whole street in Barming, Kent, turned out to toast him on the special anniversary.



"I'm just so emotional that all this has been done for me" said the former Royal Engineer.

St John's raised money for the Trust at the socially distanced street party in tribute to George and the wartime generation.



## Medical Update

Please can you remember that all students who have asthma and/or food allergies should carry the correct medication on them at all times. Students who are asthmatic should be carrying an in-date inhaler on them at all times and those who require epi-pens should be carrying two in-date pens on them at all times.

Due to COVID-19, it is vitally important that the above guidance is followed, due to risk factors relating to breathing difficulties associated with the virus.

Students who are not carrying the correct medication with them, run the risk of being sent home or parents will be contacted to bring this necessary equipment into school.

There should be spares in the medical room for emergency use, but these should not be removed or taken home.

Please could any parent needing to submit a care plan renewal please do so as soon as possible.

Mrs S Munday and Mrs A Thompson. *Care plan co-ordinators*

## Support during Covid-19

### How can I cope with my anxiety during this time?

It is completely normal to be feeling anxious or on edge particularly when we are hearing everything that is going on in the media.

Our brain is always assessing our environment for our safety and/or danger. We have a part of our brain called the amygdala and this it is like an alarm in your brain, it is always checking to see if you are safe. If you get worried, stressed or scared then it turns on the alarm and it gets hard to think clearly. If we believe we are in danger we will focus on the danger and our body will prepare to take action. This is our fight, flight, freeze response.

Given the uncertainty at this time we are unable to use our fight, flight freeze in an effective way. This is because the danger never seems to pass and we are experiencing constant levels of heightened anxiety, which means we are frequently getting ready to take action but have no way of dealing with the additional energy. This can mean we could feel more anxious, agitated and frustrated.

This leads to a panic response from people of all different ages. This can cause people to isolate further, start fights and disagreements and make bad decisions, these things can end up causing further anxiety.

### What can anxiety look like?

New and unfamiliar situations and challenging times can lead to us all experiencing an element of anxiety. Here are some things you may notice happening at this time when we can feel a bit anxious:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Restlessness</li> <li>▪ Tiredness/ Fatigue</li> <li>▪ Defiance</li> <li>▪ Reassurance seeking</li> <li>▪ Trouble concentrating</li> <li>▪ Irritability</li> <li>▪ Refusal to be without a parent</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Muscle tension</li> <li>▪ Trouble sleeping</li> <li>▪ Avoidance of completing tasks</li> <li>▪ Visible distress</li> <li>▪ Headaches</li> <li>▪ Feeling sick</li> <li>▪ Needing to go to the toilet more often</li> </ul>
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Intense anxiety can cause physical symptoms in people of all ages; like a racing heart, sweating, shaking, shortness of breath, feeling choked, chest pain, nausea, dizziness, numbness or tingling, feeling detached (depersonalisation or derealisation). **They are all normal so don't panic!**

We can get through these unpleasant feelings and return to feeling calm by different breathing techniques like Balloon Breathing and Box Breathing (please see next page).

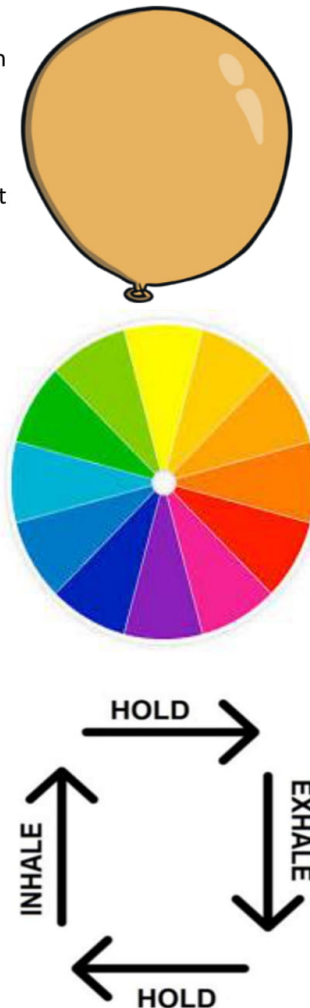


The goal of breathing exercises is to get yourself from “flight, fight or freeze” mode back to your typical rest mode. Deep breathing helps get more oxygen into your bloodstream which has a physical effect on your body to help you calm down and lower stress.

### What breathing exercises will help ease the physical reactions to anxiety?

For all of these breathing exercises, find a space Sit comfortably in a chair or maybe on the end of your bed, with your feet on the floor and hands in your lap. Do this at a time when you will have no distractions and little noise. Give yourself the time to really focus on breathing to feel calmer.

1. **Balloon Breathing:** Picture a balloon in your stomach when inhaling and push your stomach out. By doing this the breathing system is able to cope better with anxiety. When we are anxious, we breathe from the chest which creates more shallow and rapid causing hyperventilation, a faint feeling and sometimes holding the breath.
2. **Colour Breathing:** Pick a colour that represents calm, happiness or joy. Breathe in and imagine this calm, happy, positive colour. When you breathe out, imagine a colour that represents stress or anxiety and imagine this leaving your body. You can close your eyes for this exercise, focus on filling your body with the calming colour through your breath.
3. **Calm Breathing:** take a long, slow breath in through your nose, filling your lungs. Hold your breath to the count of "three." Exhale slowly, through your nose with your lips remaining together. This is thought to be the most calming way to calm the body, you can close your eyes if you feel comfortable
4. **Box Breathing:** this involves exhaling to a count of four, holding your lungs empty for a four-count, inhaling at the same pace, and holding air in your lungs for a count of four before exhaling. Repeat this sequence for 4 minutes.



*If you find it difficult to do these breathing exercises alone, there are videos that will guide you through them on YouTube.*

## What else can I do?

**Engage with people** we care about in a **safe way** (it help to calm the stress) e.g. on the phone, Facebook video chat or FaceTime. You can set up group calls and stay in contact with people who can support you. Isolation does not mean being alone, it just means for now we need to find different ways to communicate.

**Limit the time watching or reading about the media** as there is a lot of false information going around at the moment. Still **stay informed** but during a particular time so we are able to calm down and relax afterwards. The most useful thing to pay attention to is the daily press conference, this is based on our governments decisions and how we move forward and will give the most clarity at an uncertain time.

**Use social media positively.** There are several musicians playing live Instagram gigs for you to watch and stories of kindness in this uncertain time that can help boost optimism and hope.

**Build a new routine.** We are all used to routine and this helps to keep us mentally well. If you are now working from home, in self-isolation or home-schooling, try and create a routine or plan each day as it comes. Allow yourself rest breaks, keep a lunch break, and be more flexible in putting in activities like watching the tv and doing household activities.

**Keep active!** Avoid sitting down for long periods of time any form of physical movement will help. Simple actions like walking around the house or garden will help use some energy and prevent feelings of restlessness. Fresh air and natural light is a great way to boost mood. **Joe Wick's is holding live P.E classes Monday-Friday at 9am on his YouTube channel.** There are also lots of videos on YouTube for Yoga.

Try **grounding exercises** when you are feeling panicked or anxious, such as focusing on the five senses; list 5 things you can see, 4 things you can hear, 3 things you can feel, 2 things you can taste or smell and 1 big breath. This should bring us back to reality and let us focus on something more enjoyable and relaxing.

**Mindfulness** on a morning or evening can help us to relax and feel less anxious, some useful apps are: Smiling mind, Worry time, Clear Fear, Calm and Headspace

**Remember: We will get through this!**

**Things you can do whilst you are at home (feel free to tick them off as you go):**

<input type="checkbox"/> Plan your week with little things you want to accomplish <input type="checkbox"/> Set specific times for school work <input type="checkbox"/> Get up and dressed like any normal day <input type="checkbox"/> Clear out your wardrobe (could do it Marie Kondo style) <input type="checkbox"/> Self-care: Shower, skin care <input type="checkbox"/> Read a book <input type="checkbox"/> Watch Netflix (but not all day) <input type="checkbox"/> Bake <input type="checkbox"/> Dance <input type="checkbox"/> Home work-out <input type="checkbox"/> Make a travel bucket list <input type="checkbox"/> Learn a language <input type="checkbox"/> Call your grandparents <input type="checkbox"/> Learn a new skill (YouTube could be a great resource for this) <input type="checkbox"/> Classic board games: monopoly, charades, connect 4 <input type="checkbox"/> Draw or Paint <input type="checkbox"/> Create a scrap book	<input type="checkbox"/> Change the bedding <input type="checkbox"/> Tidy your room <input type="checkbox"/> Organise school work <input type="checkbox"/> Paint names <input type="checkbox"/> Play on X-box/Play station (again not all day) <input type="checkbox"/> Go for a walk <input type="checkbox"/> Have a warm drink <input type="checkbox"/> Start a jigsaw puzzle <input type="checkbox"/> FaceTime a friend <input type="checkbox"/> Wash the pots <input type="checkbox"/> Have a bath <input type="checkbox"/> Eat tea/ dinner with family <input type="checkbox"/> Listen to music <input type="checkbox"/> Sing in the shower <input type="checkbox"/> Watch a movie with your sibling or on your own <input type="checkbox"/> Social media detox for a few hours <input type="checkbox"/> Give someone a compliment <input type="checkbox"/> Watch the sun set or sun rise
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**What other things can you think of? You can write them below!**

### Helpful and important contact details for further support:

<b>Young Minds</b>	<a href="https://youngminds.org.uk/find-help/conditions/depression/">https://youngminds.org.uk/find-help/conditions/depression/</a>  Useful website with lots of information for young people.  Provides free, 24/7 crisis support across the UK if you are experiencing a mental health crisis - all texts are answered by trained volunteers, with support from experienced clinical supervisors and texts are free from EE, O2, Vodafone, 3, Virgin Mobile, BT Mobile, GiffGaff, Tesco Mobile and Telecom Plus	Text: text YM to 85258.
<b>The Mix</b>	<a href="http://www.themix.org.uk">www.themix.org.uk</a> You can talk to The Mix for free on the phone, by email or on their webchat	Freephone: 0808 808 4994 (1pm - 11pm daily)
<b>SHOUT</b> Shout is a 24/7 text service, free on all major mobile networks, for anyone in crisis anytime, anywhere. It's a place to go if you're struggling to cope and you need help.	<a href="https://www.giveusashout.org/">https://www.giveusashout.org/</a>	Text: Shout to 85258
<b>Childline</b> Anyone under 19 in the UK with any issue they're going through. Trained counsellors.	<a href="https://www.childline.org.uk/">https://www.childline.org.uk/</a> Download the Childline App – Pin locked, 1-2-1 chats, tips and advice.	Tel: 0800 1111 – FREE doesn't show up on phone bills.
<b>Prevention of Young Suicide (Papyrus)</b>	<a href="https://papyrus-uk.org/">https://papyrus-uk.org/</a> Email: <a href="mailto:pat@papyrus-uk.org">pat@papyrus-uk.org</a>	0800 068 41 41 – Call 07786209 697 - Text
<b>The Calm Zone</b>	<a href="https://www.thecalmzone.net/">https://www.thecalmzone.net/</a>	5pm – midnight 365 days a year 0800 58 58 58
<b>Thirteen (website)</b> Information website	<a href="http://thirteen.me.uk/">http://thirteen.me.uk/</a>	Advice and Support on an array of potential issues
<b>YoungMinds'</b> Support for parents on their child's mental health	<a href="http://www.youngminds.org.uk">www.youngminds.org.uk</a>	Free helpline for advice on: 0808 802 5544
<b>NHS</b> Advice number for medical issues.	<a href="https://www.nhs.uk/using-the-nhs/nhs-services/urgent-and-emergency-care/nhs-111/">https://www.nhs.uk/using-the-nhs/nhs-services/urgent-and-emergency-care/nhs-111/</a> If you have difficulties communicating or hearing you can: - Call 18001 111 on a text phone	For urgent medical problems but unsure what to do? Call 111 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.
<b>999</b> <b>ONLY call 999 if your life is in imminent danger.</b>	If your life is in imminent danger	Call 999 and select the appropriate service



## Chaplain's Corner

### Chaplain's Corner July 2020

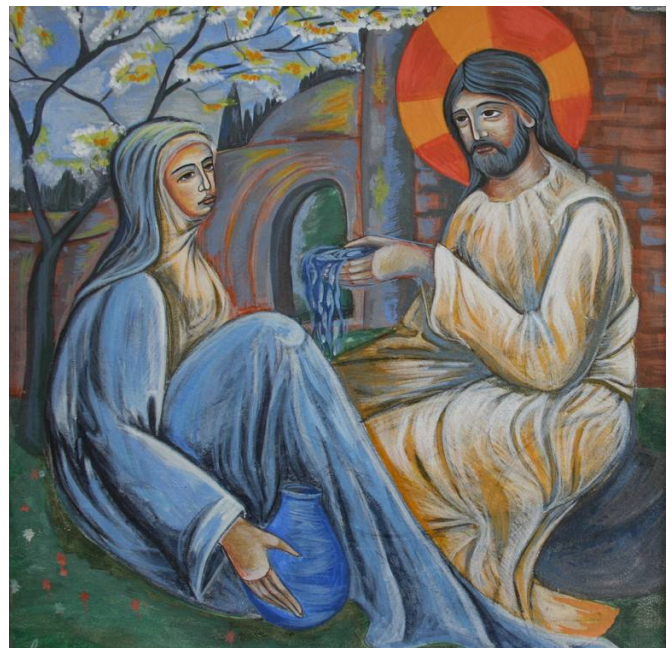
Although lockdown is easing, I'm sure you are all too aware that 'normality' is still a distant idea, and school and home life 'as it was before', is a long way off. I worry for the future of many of our young people that have missed out on so much education, and for families facing desperate financial situations. Then there are emotional and mental health issues, not to mention those that have suffered tragic bereavements. I hope that amongst all these challenges, that families have managed to salvage some good things from all this, such as perhaps more time to talk with our loved ones and work on our relationships.



At St John's we feel it is important that we nurture in our children their humanity; their good character and their maturity. But we (parents and school) are not the only influences that affect their upbringing. Their peers and the society in which they live have their effect too. I wonder how many of our young people were disturbed by the graphic images of the killing of George Floyd and the killing of Rayshard Brooks in the USA, and by the mass 'Black Lives Matter' protests that have followed.

Do we talk to our young people objectively about such things? Do our words cause them to think or just to get angry. Blacks lives absolutely do matter! But there is so much prejudice in the world to so many groups, that it is perhaps time for everyone in society to stop and reflect, and then see what we can do to genuinely bring about change.

In the time of Jesus, the Jews considered that the Samaritans were contemptible and would not so much as talk to them, and vice versa, such was the enmity between them; yet Jesus famously talked to the Samaritan woman at the well (*John 4:4-42*). I'm not sure if you are familiar with the story, but she was a woman with a sinful past, a past that Jesus demonstrated that he was aware of and yet offered her salvation and life. The woman grasped his offer with such enthusiasm that through her testimony the whole village was converted!



What has this got to do with all the conflict in the world, Deacon Michael? The answer is that love and 'relationship' should have no boundaries. The wives of many of the great characters of the Old Testament such as Isaac, Jacob, Joseph and Moses were encountered at a well. One of the key ways the Jewish people understood their relationship with God was that God is the 'bridegroom' to his people 'his bride'; in other words, the deepest and profoundly intimate relationship. The Samaritan woman at the well represents all of us, sinful but loved, and



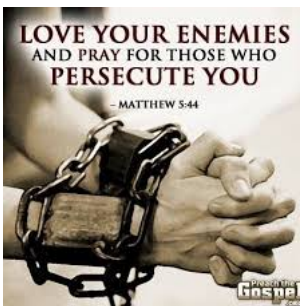
invited into the deepest of relationships with Jesus, who is God. If Jesus can love us, mercifully, despite our sins and unworthiness, then we must love each other in the same way, even when that love is undeserved. That is how we change the world; by loving all as brothers and sisters.

We must energetically demand an end to deep seated prejudices and ill treatment of our brothers and sisters, but never with hatred. Early in the Covid-19 lockdown period my wife and I re-watched the film 'Ghandi'. I was so struck with how he could be militant and loving at the same time. Often he was challenged to hate and yet he would tell his tempters that 'you and I might be just like them if we walked in their shoes'; he was resolute but always merciful.



*A protester carried an injured counter-protester to safety, near Waterloo station*

The above image from the recent protests, that went viral, struck me deeply. Jesus said we should 'love our enemy'. This image carries great power; a power that I hope inspires people and challenges those who carry prejudice in their hearts to think again.



St Maximillian Kolbe, who famously gave his life in the Auschwitz concentration camp, by offering to take the place of a stranger who was to be brutally murdered, still considered his evil captors his brothers; he refused to hate. Another inspiring film I watched recently was about the American-Italian Olympic runner, Louis Zamperini, who though starved and tortured horrifically in a Japanese war camp, later, after years of mental struggle, gave his life to Jesus. He later travelled back to Japan to forgive and embrace his torturers face to face.

Ethnic prejudice comes in many forms and victims may often be black, but to list a few varied groups, may be Roma, Rohingya, Aborigine, Mauri, indigenous American Indian, Pygmy, or Jew to name but a few. But it is the same root sin that causes sexism, or people to spurn the weak, or to prefer the popular to the unpopular, or the abled to the disabled.

Everyone is precious, everyone is unique and irreplaceable, and no-one is excluded from the love of God. If we are to love like God, we need to know him and be filled by his grace to overflowing. Let us grasp the opportunity to talk with our young people about the values and attitudes that will shape their character and make the world a better place; and above all to know the power the grace of God.

I'll leave you with this prayer taken from a daily Catholic prayer book known as the Divine Office:



### A morning prayer

Eternal Father, it is by your will that we praise you: the wonder of our making is only surpassed by the splendour and joy of our coming to life in Christ.

Lord, be with us as we start a new day: move our hearts to seek you and our wills to serve you.

Deepen our awareness of your presence: teach us reverence and love for all that you made.

To know you is to love those you created: let our lives and our work be of service to our brothers

We adore you our Lord and God.

AMEN

God bless you all,

*Deacon Michael*