

# Voice from the Vicarage 3rd November 2022

Dear All,

Finding serenity in the city, maybe anywhere, can be something of a challenge. For example, trying to find the serenity to sleep with the sound of heavy, thumping music from the garden of the Retreat Hotel across the road until midnight and often beyond. And today, as the 'lads' do the work for which we have commissioned them, stripping out the downstairs bathroom as part of the transformation of the vicarage to parish house, there is of course quite a bit of banging. But that noisy activity is good labour and for a better cause..and won't be night after night!



*Jack the builder at some goodly labour!*

## Noisy silence...

Actually finding serenity in silence can also be a challenge. Silence can bring one face to face with a load of stuff, inner stuff, inner 'noise'. Over the years I've found myself praying for the gift of serenity for myself time and time again. And in spending time praying with other folk, I have often felt inspired to ask the Lord to give them the same gift.

There is a moment in every mass when the celebrant expresses that hope, and we express it to one another: **"Peace be with you"**. It's the Lord's own peace that we are offering, hoping for, in one another.

## Friday 'Lectio'

As you may know, each Friday at 6pm there is the opportunity for a short time of 'Lectio Divina'. I love to see a group of folk each taking up a Bible, finding the passage chosen, listening to it, sitting in silence with it, and then sharing reflections as the Lord gives to each person. Some lovely insights emerge and I think everyone who is there takes more away with them than what they brought.

Last week, we reflected on what that **'peace which the word cannot give'** is which Jesus gives to the disciples during the traumatic Thursday evening before his death the following day (John 14). The eleven left in the Upper Room after Judas leaves, all know that something is afoot, but don't then understand. Ultimately, as the disciples will discover, as I pray you and I have discovered (or are in the process of discovering and believing), that physical death need no longer be the ultimate enemy, nor the little 'deaths' that come our way during the changes and changes of daily living. There is Ultimate Love.

## A privileged visit...

As is sometimes the way and privilege for a priest, this Tuesday I visited one of our longtime parishioners, Mary Hillman. Her physical death is certainly not far away. I took her holy communion and anointed her. When death is near, these rites are sometimes called 'Viaticum', which essentially means 'provision for a journey', food for the journey. Since her Confirmation, this has been her staple diet for her journey through life. Now, it is the provision for the most profound of all her journeyings, and she knows and believes our consistent Lord will not forsake her. "In the end, there is God. I know that," she told me through glistening, yet smiling eyes. She is as ready as I think anyone can be. She is serene and peaceful. The death of this quiet, deep and very caring person will usher forth many tears from those who love her. When the time comes, we shall miss her, but as we agreed, we shall see each other 'later'.

Pray for our Mary.

## A godly trumpet

Wasn't it good to have a bit of trumpet last Sunday? **Sam**, who also moonlights as a barista in 'The Lamb' was hidden by the organ, so his bursting forth in the last verse of 'All creatures of our God and King' came as a lovely surprise to those out of view! 'The Lamb' was abuzz about his contribution to our worship, and about our cantors, **Eleanor and Anna**, who sang so well, not least as we introduced a new setting of the Gloria to add to our repertoire. They also sang the Prayer of St Richard of Chichester, which was so much a part of my life when I worked in the diocese where that saint had been the bish-

Lord, may we know thee more clearly,  
love thee more dearly,  
and follow thee more nearly, day by day...



*Post mass conversation spilled out of 'The Lamb'. Passers by were agog!*

*In the right corner of this snap is Renee who we have been praying for these many months as she has battled with serious illness. Such a joy to welcome her, and husband Tony back to mass!*

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## Looking Ahead...

As we look ahead, Jesse Lattarulo has been designing a postcard for distribution ahead of our **Carols and Jazz**

**and Jazz** celebration, which will take place on **Wednesday 14th December**. An extra bit of good news is that we will be joined on that evening by members of the **Baptist Church** who will join in the fun, and join the team at the B

B Q! Hopefully, the cards and posters will be available in the next week or so.

*And finally,* LAMB B & B this Sunday @ 6

**Silence, song, and Adoration by candlelight, followed by refreshments...** Much love, + *Lindsay*

