

Thought for Holy Week

Like many other people, once again on Thursday evening at 8pm mum and I were stood at the end of the Rectory drive clapping our hands as loud as we could for all the carers who are working so hard during this terrible pandemic. 'Clap for Carers' was a simple idea that has taken off. As I paused my clapping because my arms ached, I could hear applause and hooters coming from the east, west and north of Storrington. It was great to hear so many who clearly wanted to join in the thanks. At this time we are all acutely aware of the hard work and self-sacrifice of all those at the front line of caring – doctors, nurses and other health professionals in our hospitals and in our Glebe Surgery, care staff in residential homes and private homes, ambulance drivers and paramedics. To them we owe a massive debt of gratitude.

There are other people who deserve our gratitude as well – those on the front line in our local food shops, those who keep the deliveries arriving and those who re-stock the shelves, those who produce our food, those who collect our rubbish, or deliver our post, and also those many people who have volunteered their time to help others in need. We are a village blessed with many wonderful people. The Storrington and Sullington Community Partnership have come up trumps with the organisation of the Storrington Hub (07514 118678) for anyone who is self-isolating who needs help with shopping, picking up medication, or simply a friendly phone call.

I always find giving up things for Lent difficult, but I never expected to have to give up going to church and socialising with friends! I am finding this is a really challenging Lent. Easter will certainly be different this year – no services, no ceremony of lighting the Easter candle and singing the Exsultet, the Easter song of praise. But it does make me thankful for the Easters of the past, and hopeful for the Easters to come. Perhaps this short time of abstinence from the things I love will make me appreciate them all the more when they resume.

With love and prayers, Canon Kathryn Windslow

'Lent' by Ann Lewin

Lent is a time to learn to travel

Light, to clear the clutter

From our crowded lives, and

Find a space, a

Desert.

Deserts are bleak: no creature

Comforts, only a vast expanse of

Stillness, sharpening awareness of

Ourselves and

God.

Uncomfortable places, deserts.

Most of the time we're tempted to

Avoid them, finding good reasons to

Live lives of ease, cushioned by

Noise from self-discovery,

Clutching at world's success to

Stave off

Fear.

But if we dare to trust the silence

To strip away our false security,

God can begin to grow his wholeness in us,

Fill up our emptiness, destroy our fears,

Give us new vision, courage for the journey

And make our desert blossom like a

Rose.