



# St Peter's Parish

## e-newsletter

27<sup>th</sup> May 2020

[www.stpeterrealing.org.uk](http://www.stpeterrealing.org.uk)

### **The Vicar's Letter** Fruits of the Spirit – goodness (Galatians 5.22-23)

The latest edition of the Amnesty Magazine arrived this week subtitled 'Coronavirus Special'. There are very real concerns in the world of the treatment of prisoners of conscience. In many cases the arrival of coronavirus has heightened those concerns. Trapped in prison, awaiting trial or wrongly convicted; incarcerated because you said or wrote something the authorities didn't like is bad enough. To be in such a state and now fear an unintentional death penalty from a virus your authorities are not ready to cope with or are not willing to admit to just piles on anxiety, fear and concern. All this I expected as I opened the magazine.

And then, there in the middle a selection of brilliant smiling faces from all over the world representing the thousands of ways people have come together to support and care for those in need at this time. A man in a spiderman suit delivering bags of vegetables in Mexico; self-isolating workers in Tunisia electing to stay at their factory to make masks for health workers; volunteers in Tijuana offering time to disinfect places where people have gathered; teachers volunteering to cook for the sick in the Johannesburg suburbs; volunteers delivering packages in Italy.

In all the darkness of the world, and there is a lot of darkness, we often do not see the myriad of lights, the good things that happen, the kindnesses offered. Jesus described himself in John's Gospel (John 8.12) as the light of the world. As we approach Pentecost, living in Ascensiontide a question lingers, a question I guess the disciples had, where to now? Has the light gone out? Of course not for the light continues in us in the goodness that comes from people's hearts, shown in their actions as well as their words. Goodness, thankfully in many ways, is not newsworthy. We then hear less of it and yet it is in the world in ways we cannot imagine. The place of goodness far outweighs and outshines the darker parts of our world and in the life of the faithful is a witness to the spirit of God in each of us. Goodness is not just a Christian thing. Thankfully anyone can show it, some of us give praise to God for it.

As a fruit of the spirit goodness is part of a collage of characteristics Christians are encouraged to exhibit in their daily lives as signs of God's love in the world. Goodness is one taken for granted and yet easily exercised and one that can bring joy to others so easily. We know that joy is the joy of God we experience in our own lives and share with others.

Fr David

#### **Five 30min Sessions on the Holy Eucharist**

**with tea or coffee and pictures Online @ 5.30pm led by Fr Adam**

- 1st Session - 7 May Origin of the Eucharist (The Bible and the Church Fathers)
- 2nd Session - 14 May Introductory Rites (Forming a community to worship)
- 3rd Session - 21 May Liturgy of the Word (God speaks to us through Scripture)
- 4th Session - 4 June (NB: No meeting on the 28<sup>th</sup> as previously advertised) Liturgy of the Eucharist (The memorial of the Lord's Passion and Resurrection)
- 5th Session - 11 June Concluding Rites (Christian missiology)

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## Stewardship and Giving



It is amazing how ‘ticked off’ people can get when the church asks for money. Yet they have no idea how ticked off the clergy get in having to ask in the first place. In my last parish I had two old timers who, every stewardship programme, would go on about the church being the second largest land owner in the country, about the church having all this wealth, all this fine silver and gold, all these fine vestments, why should they be constantly asked to put their hands in their pockets when the church already has all these riches. I readily admit this used to gall me. I know they were goading me, having a jolly dig at the vicar. Behind what they were saying was, in their minds, a genuine criticism of the

church. A bit of ‘physician heal thy self’ I guess.

Another issue that comes up quite regularly when talking about stewardship and the increases in costs like common fund, is the Diocesan and National authorities and what were they doing to bring costs into line. Why should we pay full common fund when they should be making savings and cost cuttings?

On the face of it two good sets of arguments...until you unpack them. Let us take the first set. Yes, the Church of England is one of the biggest landowners. In every town there are several churches with vicarages and gardens and churchyards, all ‘owned’ by the CofE. We could sell them all, raise funds as suggested, but then there would be no church to fund anyway. In this case the landed status of the CofE is not a realisable wealth. The CofE does have some farms, property in the city and other land investments. These are used to generate income to support the national church. Sell them and we lose an income stream. Same with the silver and gold (not that there is that much too be honest), all gifts to the glory of God, valuable in themselves but unrealisable value. Vestments, again gifts, like most of what we have, not investments with a realisable value.

Ok so the Diocese must make cuts. When I first came to the Diocese in 1991 the Diocesan Office was four floors of offices, with officers and secretaries oiling the wheels of the Diocesan structure. Now it is just one floor, most of the officers gone, technology used to its best and still the work of God is done. Each year, as a new budget is presented, a balanced budget, cuts are made and departments trimmed, not always to our benefit either. Not much if any fat there to cut.

Besides, the issue of stewardship should not be about how much we should not be asked to give but how much we can give to the glory of God. Stewardship is about wanting to be part of the life of the mission of God and asking “what can I give?” not “what can they save?”. Now, whilst we are in this season of reflection and while we have the time to think and talk about stewardship, is a good time to review your giving. You can review your stewardship through your bank using our banking details below. Thank you in advance.

Fr David

Bank: HSBC

Account Name: Parochial Church Council of St Peters Ealing Parish

Account Number: 60377082

Sort Code: 40 11 58

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### **St Peters Pastoral Assistance Programme has become the WLL Community Shopping Service.**

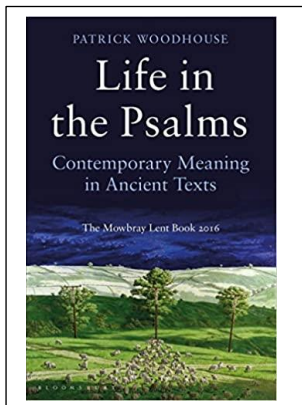
As time goes on and we become clearer of the more permanent place COVID19 seems to be having in society it is quite possible this service will be needed for a while longer. As Government plans for virus tracking and localised isolation are uncovered so flexible and serviceable systems for support in the community are going to be needed. That means being prepared to be available and not always being needed. We are then going to continue to need volunteers to support the

community with shopping, a chat on the phone or the collection of prescriptions. We are working out what this might mean. Until that is sorted Margaret Joachim is co-ordinating this shopping service. We could do with your help. If you would like to help, if you know someone who could do with some help or indeed if you yourself need help then get in touch. The phone number to use is 07595 911178.

**Please also note the new Ealing Borough website: <https://ealingtogether.org/>** Loads of information help and advice is there.

### **Finding Your Way Round Your Bible: Half Term break**

Our Bible librarian is taking a well earned break this week. She promises to be back next week with The Apocrypha. Watch this space.



### **LIFE IN THE PSALMS by Patrick Woodhouse**

Published by Bloomsbury Press, 2015

I wonder if, like me, the psalms have left you cold. There they sit, somewhere in the middle of the Old Testament, a bunch of archaic poems that don't seem to make much sense. We normally come across them as a sung part of the parish mass or, if you get to a cathedral for evensong as part of the choir offering, often made to Anglican plain chant. When I was at college there was a great falling out amongst the students over the psalms. In those good old days we used the Alternative Service Book. In that book certain psalms had had their less favourable verses bracketed, allowing the reader

to omit them if they wanted. In college we had three factions: those fully supportive of using the whole psalm, hard verses and all; the 'bracketeers' who wanted the bracketed verses removed from our liturgy and the editors who wanted to exclude the psalms altogether, arguing the psalms were not a Christian text, something we might want to discuss.

My lukewarm relationship with the psalms has become more enlivened over time. Each day, twice a day as part of the daily office we recite some of the psalms as set in the daily lectionary. Over time I have come to hear the writer's concerns and joys. I have begun to understand some of the complexity of life and faith through the psalmist's words. But it is not until I have looked at psalms through Fr Patrick's eyes that I have begun to grapple with the psalm's depth of faith and insight.

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This book, written as The Mowbray Lent Book for 2016, brings life and light to the words of the psalmists. Fr Patrick is a retired Anglican priest who, through his own worship life and faith journey, has plumbed the depths of the psalms read and sung as part of the cathedral worship in Wells where he was a Canon. In this book he takes the reader on a gentle and enlightened journey of discovery, encouraging us to take a fresh and informed view of the psalms as an important part of our understanding of faith for the present day. This is an easy and gentle read unpacking 30 psalms, to be mulled over and thought about maybe as part of your daily prayer routine or standalone spiritual reading. We are encouraged to read the book slowly. The chapters are short and there is plenty to think about. This is one of the best spiritual books I have read for a while.

Fr David

**The Final Clap for our Carers:** Thursday 28 May at 8pm <https://clapforourcarers.co.uk/>. Bang those saucepans and ring those bells!



### **The Holy Spirit and the Life of the Church**



The Nicene Creed, a Symbol of faith has three parts - of the Father and creation, of the Son and redemption, and of the Spirit and sanctification. We believe the Father is God, the Son is God, and the Holy Spirit is God, but they are not three gods but only one God. We believe also that the Son is the eternal image that the Father has of his own perfections, and the Holy Spirit is the eternal love that flows between the Father and the Son as they delight in each other. So, the Father is not the Son, the Son is

not the Spirit, the Spirit is not the Father, but each is God individually and yet they are together the one. The doctrine of the Trinity.

Scripture reveals that the Spirit proceeds from the Father and the Son. The external relationships of the persons of the Trinity mirror their internal relationships. To proceed means to come from or be sent by ("I will send you the Advocate—the Spirit of truth. He will come to you from the Father and will testify all about me" John 15:26). So, the Holy Spirit was sent by the Father and the Son onto the apostles to equip them and prepare them for their ministry.

In Hebrew, we have two words for Spirit: wind and breath and they are nearly the same. In trying to describe God's activity among them, the ancients were saying that it was like God's breath, like a sacred wind. "When the day of Pentecost arrived, they were all together in one place. And suddenly there came from heaven a sound like a mighty rushing wind, and it filled the entire house where they were sitting" (Acts 2:1). It could not be seen or held: "The wind blows where it chooses, and you hear the sound of it, but you do not know where it comes from or where it goes" (John 3:8) but the effect of God's Spirit, like the wind, could be felt and known.

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The Holy Spirit is also depicted in the Bible as: a Dove (symbol of God's blessing and pleasure. The dove expresses the Holy Spirit's gentleness, innocence, purity, and patience: Mt 3:16; Mk 1:10; Lk 3:22; Jn 1:32); a Tongue of Fire or a Flame (this symbol is taken from Luke's Pentecost account when a tongue of fire came to rest over the head of each of the disciples and they were filled with the Holy Spirit: Acts 2:3-4); a Cloud (the Holy Spirit is the mysterious and abiding presence of God, and clouds appear frequently throughout both the Old and New Testaments to signify God's presence: (Ex 19:9; Lk 3:22; Lk 9:35); a Water (through the prophet Isaiah, the Holy Spirit invited the people to approach the Spirit's fountain of grace: Is 55:1; also the baptism of Jesus is a baptism of the Holy Spirit: Lk 3:16. In Baptism the newly baptized is given to drink of one Spirit: 1 Cor 12:13); a Oil (In the Hebrew Scriptures, priests were consecrated in the power of the Holy Spirit with holy oil: Ex 29:7. The prophet Isaiah also speaks of oil as a symbol of the Lord's spirit: "the Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because the Lord has anointed me: he has sent me to bring glad tidings to the lowly", Is 61:1) Ephesians 1:3-10 teaches that when the Father gives the Holy Spirit to us, we also receive all of Christ's benefits of sonship. Our justification, sanctification, adoption, and glorification come to us through our union with Christ. Through Jesus, we also receive the Gifts of the Holy Spirit. In the light of the list found in Isaiah 11:2-3 there are seven gifts of the Spirit of the Lord: Wisdom (an innate sense of what is right, and of being able to distinguish the eternal from the temporal); Understanding (the ability to comprehend the meaning of God's message); Knowledge (the ability to think about and explore God's revelation, and also to recognize there are mysteries of faith beyond us); Right Judgment, or Counsel (prudence, helping the believer discern what are the right choices for living a holy life); Fortitude (the courage to do what one knows is right); Piety (humility or genuine honesty corresponding to reality with confidence in God as the one true Good); Fear of the Lord (the feeling of amazement before God, who is all-present, and whose friendship we do not want to lose). The Isaiah gifts are the gifts that dwell in us. These are the gifts that will sustain us through our spiritual journey. When we nurture these gifts and allow them to grow in us, we allow God to transform our life into the way in which He wants us to be. That's why, all of salvation, from the beginning to the end, is a gift from God the Father, accomplished by God the Son, and given through God the Holy Spirit.

One crucial role of the Holy Spirit is to teach us spiritual truth. Jesus said, "the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, he will teach you all things and bring to your remembrance all that I have said to you" (John 14:26). We believe that the Holy Spirit inspired holy men to write the Scriptures – The Holy Bible. We believe that the Holy Bible contains the full revelation of God and it is the final and absolute authority in all matters related to the church as well the personal life of each of us. Without the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, the Scriptures would have never been written, and yet without the illumination of the Holy Spirit, the Scriptures would never be understood.

The Holy Spirit is a gift of God's Love. The Holy Spirit is our promise. The Holy Spirit is God's personal presence within us. The Holy Spirit is the power. The power we need to be Jesus witnesses throughout the world. The Holy Spirit is a passion. That's nothing about to be emotional. It means to be like a fire. Full of passion in our faith.

The Holy Spirit speaks to us the truth about God and shows us the love of the Father and the self-giving of the Son. He testifies to the truth that Jesus is the Son of God, that he was born in Bethlehem, became a human to save us through his death on the cross and his resurrection from the grave. He guarantees that the promises of God in the Bible are true. For instance, when Jesus says that those who live and believe in him will never die but have eternal life, the Holy Spirit pledges that this is true and is not to be doubted.

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The Holy Spirit testifies who we are. We are God's children, we are spirit-filled people. For each of us Pentecost (the coming of the Holy Spirit to us) occurred when we were baptised. Through the water and God's Word of promise we were adopted into God's family, our sins were forgiven and we received the Spirit of God who promises that throughout our life's journey, through the twists and turns that life takes us, he is always there. He reminds us that God never gives up on us. He comforts us when we are sad. He lifts us up when we are down. The Spirit gives us the power to live as children of God. Through the Spirit working in and with us, God is no longer distant and remote; the cross and resurrection of Christ are more than historical events, now they are part of our being.

Without the Holy Spirit there would be no Christians and no Church. Without the Holy Spirit, God would be a distance. Christ would be only a historical figure, the Gospel would be a dead letter, the Church - just an organization, the authority - domination, the mission - propaganda, the liturgy - only nostalgia, and the work of Christians - slave labour.

Through the Spirit working in and with us, God is no longer distant and remote; the cross and resurrection of Christ are more than historical events, now they are part of our being. Christ is risen and present. The Gospel is a living force, the Church is a communion in the life of the Trinity; authority is a service that sets the people free, mission is Pentecost, the liturgy is memory and anticipation, and the labour of Christians is divinized.

The Holy Spirit is to the Church what air is to every human being. Air surrounds us, so completely that we sometimes forget it is there. We breathe it continuously; without always realizing; what we are doing. So, it is with the Holy Spirit. He empowers our lives. He deepens our faith. He motivates our mission. And he demonstrates beyond the shadow of a doubt that God has a plan for all people – to know Jesus as Lord and Saviour.

Fr Adam

### **Worship this week:**

#### **Sunday 31<sup>st</sup> May – Pentecost Sunday**

09.15am Kids Church for all our younger members (via Zoom)

10.00am Parish Worship (via Zoom)

5.30pm Evening Prayer (via Zoom)

#### **Monday – Friday**

9am Morning Prayer (individual prayer)

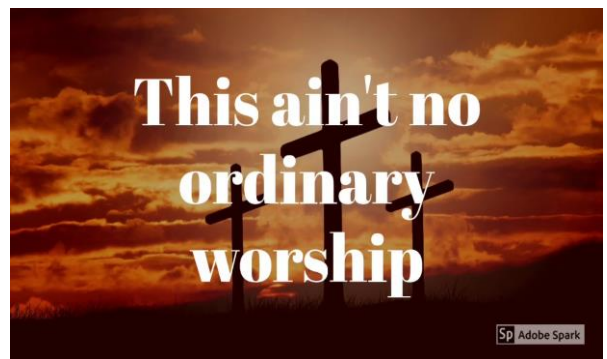
9.30pm Compline (via Zoom)

#### **Monday-Tuesday, Thursday – Friday**

5pm Evening Prayer (individual prayer)

#### **Wednesday**

5pm Contemplative Prayer (via Zoom)



You can download Zoom onto your device or you can call in by phone, dialling the number given in the email. You will also need to have downloaded the Daily Prayer app onto your device or find it via the Church of England website ([www.churchofengland.org/prayer-and-worship/join-us-service-daily-prayer](http://www.churchofengland.org/prayer-and-worship/join-us-service-daily-prayer))

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## Ring The Archbishop!

The Archbishop of Canterbury, Justin Welby, has launched a free national phone line as a simple new way to bring worship and prayer into people's homes while church buildings are closed because of the coronavirus.

Daily Hope, which is available from today, offers music, prayers and reflections as well as full worship services from the Church of England at the end of a telephone line.

The line – which is available 24 hours a day on 0800 804 8044 – has been set up particularly with those unable to join online church services during the period of restrictions in mind.

## Alison G's musical meanderings for Ascension and Whitsuntide

Much music has been written over the centuries in celebration of these wonderful festivals; from complex choir pieces to hymns and songs for congregations of all denominations.

Here is my selection for this joyful and expansive part of the church year! The first two pieces are from very different musical traditions, yet both similarly restrained considering the events they are celebrating.

First an anthem from the late Tudor period, in English, By Orlando Gibbons (1583-1625) 'God is gone up with a merry noise'.

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Zdq2U\\_uv0SQ](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Zdq2U_uv0SQ)

Then from an Orthodox choir, also singing in English: 'God has gone up with a shout' <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hjXiqEzwtIQ>

If all this restraint is too much, how about..... a 'Big Sing' from the Royal Albert Hall with 'Shine Jesus Shine' <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=D4hXJ9ax2FY> or a devotional song 'Holy Spirit Come with Your Fire'

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DOlj242UxpM>

I hope we are all enjoying singing hymns on our Zoom services, and of course that we will soon be making a 'merry noise' together back in St Peter's.

**Contemplative Prayer Group.** Centering prayer aims to help us find the space to be with God, without words or actions, just being. We spend a lot of time in words and with words and using words. Words make noise that can be used to drown other stuff out. That stuff can be God. Contemplative prayer, another name for centering prayer, helps us be in God's presence; helps us to get past the noise that can come between us and God so that we can. We have spent so much of our lives with noise and words, being with God isn't easy to do, although it is the easiest thing to do. By focusing on a sacred word, a word made sacred by its use not by its definition, contemplative prayer helps us relax into God's presence, into God's arms. Br Thomas Keating using the image of a river, a busy, boat filled river. This is all that is passing through our minds, filling our thought, creating noise that blocks out God. as we stand on the river bank our eyes fall upon the boats and the busy-ness. Using our sacred word we are gently drawn back to focusing on God and being in God's presence, knowing and loving God and being known and loved by God. Our minds will draw us back to that busy



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river. Br Thomas says just let it all go, use your sacred word and come back to God. over time and with practice it becomes easier to focus on God and center oneself in his presence. We take time each week to do this together to be encouraged in our prayer and discipline and in fellowship to be encouraged on our journey. Come and join us, Wednesdays @ 5pm.

### **Supporting Local Business –**

We hope you can continue to support local business. These below have been tried out and are very good. If you know of others, we can advertise here; please let Fr David know. It is good to shop local.

**Steak on the Green, Haven Green.** Please think about supporting a local business by visiting Steak on the Green's Steak Shop website and having excellent quality steak and other ready to cook food delivered to your door. (At least three parish households have made the most of this and recommend them!) Visit

<https://www.steakonthegreen.com/shop>

**ECC: Electric Coffee Co., Haven Green.** As a follow up to the piece last week on the ECC I did place an order for bread flour. True to his word, after making the BACS transfer of £6 Simon appeared the next afternoon with two 1.5kg bags of flour that have made splendid loaves. The service was friendly and easy. I would recommend. Check out their Facebook page ([www.facebook.com/Electric-Coffee-Co-187327251353877/](http://www.facebook.com/Electric-Coffee-Co-187327251353877/)). They list their wines there too as well as an interesting array of stock to sell. The email Simon on [simon@electriccoffee.co.uk](mailto:simon@electriccoffee.co.uk) with your order. He'll give you the banking details, you make the transfer and voila! another happy customer. A few of us have used this service. Its very good.



Ealing foodbank is working harder than ever as jobs are lost, furlough becomes increasingly difficult to maintain and that pound must be made to stretch just a little further. Each Wednesday we continue to take supplies to Ealing Foodbank whose services are depended upon more and more. Please add a little extra to your shopping and contribute to this important work. Shopping can be dropped off at the Vicarage or at our local shops such as Waitrose or Tesco's where you will find drop off points. Please do help as best you can. These times are hard for many local families, and it does not look as if it is getting better anytime soon. Please find our May Shopping List below:

Vegetable Curry/Chilli – tins; Macaroni Cheese / Cheese Ravioli in Tomato Sauce – tins; Fray Bentos Tinned Pies - Cheese & Onion/Vegetable Balti; Tinned Meat - beef, lamb, chicken, ham; Rice Pudding & Custard (Ready Made); Peanut Butter; Instant Coffee; Shower Gel/Hand Wash/Bars of Soap

Size 6 Nappies

We've got plenty of Pasta; Pulses

This foodbank is run in partnership with local churches, facilitated by Ealing Foodbank. Registered charity number 1156369 | Registered in England and Wales

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## Prayer requests:

Please pray for:

Suzi; Cicely Pratt; Elaine Dunkley; Keith Win; John Pullan; Madeleine Anthony; (Babak Khoswroshahi is much better now and out of intensive care. His family thanks you for your prayers and have asked he be taken off the list – alleluia!)

Recently deceased: Joan Brooks; Michael Mulligan

Those we cannot be with now and who weigh heavy on our hearts.  
Carers and health workers; those keeping supplies lines operational  
Each other and ourselves.

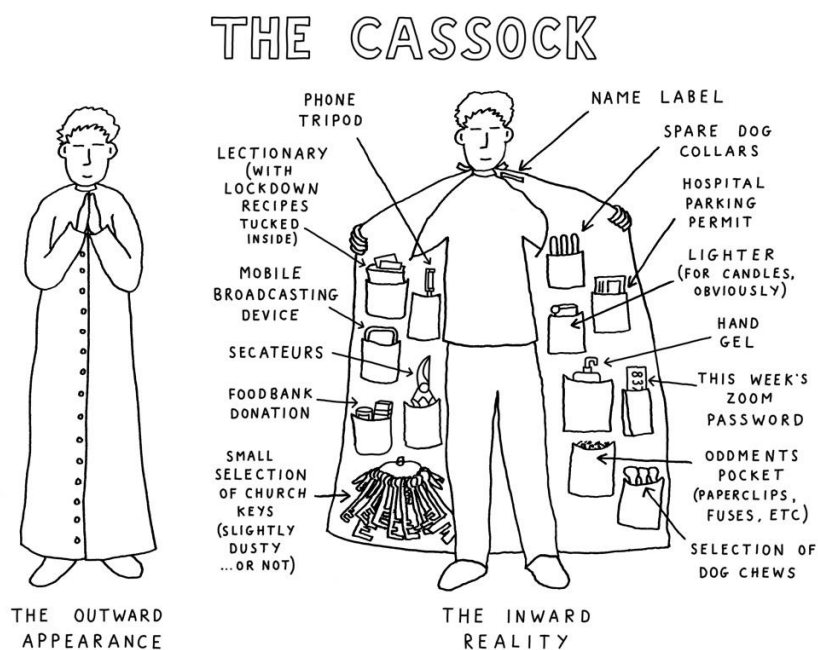
(if you would like names added to this list please send them to Fr David)



Keep us, good Lord,  
under the shadow of your mercy.  
Sustain and support the anxious,  
be with those who care for the sick,  
and lift up all who are brought low;  
that we may find comfort  
knowing that nothing can separate us from your love  
in Christ Jesus our Lord.  
**Amen.**

## Contributions.

A very big thank you to those who have already contributed pieces to this newsletter. It is so great (and makes my life easier) to have contributions from our readers. It would be great to have more. Material to me at the email below by Wednesday would be great.



CartoonChurch.com

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