

Thought for the Month

October 2020

Reflecting on the way things are

We are a CEV household. We join many across the country who live with someone who is 'Clinically Extremely Vulnerable', needing to shield through the period of lockdown. One of my daughters has a rare condition called Dravet Syndrome, and she is very vulnerable to viral conditions that can easily (and frequently) lead to a trip to hospital. It has been a hard few months! As I know it has been for many others across the community.

Our experience of withdrawing from the world has been difficult in many ways, but it has also given me the opportunity to find a new resonance with some of my spiritual heroes - the early Christian hermits who lived in the Egyptian wilderness in the 4th and 5th centuries AD. These men and women have inspired Christians down the centuries with their words and their example, and with lives focused on God in prayer. Many of them chose to withdraw from the world in order to open up space for prayer and were then able to speak to the world and the Church with a new voice.

There are many things we miss about the pre-covid world, but there are many things we have gained as well. More time appreciating home and garden, a deepening of conversation and relationship with those who are closest to us, and an opportunity for faith to grow deeper too.

I miss gathering together for worship. I miss meeting with friends and family easily and frequently. But we are finding new ways to be together too, and new ways for God to break into our lives, in ways that were hard to see when our lives were busier.

An Elder said: "In the same way that no plant whatsoever can come up on a well-trodden highway, not even if you throw seed on it, because the surface is trodden down, so it is with us. Retire quietly from all worldly business and you will see things growing that you did not know were in you, for you were walking on them."

All of our lives have changed over these past few months. I wonder what has been able to grow in your life because of this? Where is God doing something new?

Revd Simon Monk