

## **From Fr Simon**

Dear all

Remember, remember, the fifth of November.

We do a lot of remembering at this time of year. Bonfire night takes us right back to childhood; the smell of smoke in our clothes, the crackle of sparks in the air, the tingle of cold hands in gloves and cold toes in wellies.

In November we also have Remembrance Sunday, which helps us to remember things that we possibly have never experienced. I've never been personally caught up in armed conflict, and yet each year I remember the effects of war, of lives given and families bereaved.

In Church we have All Saints and All Souls days, special times for remembering people who have died, from whom we can still learn to live better.

This year everything is a bit different. Our celebrations are curtailed, we peer over masks, often through steamed-up glasses, we watch on the internet rather than attend in person. And we remember those days when we could just go to the shops, or go to church, or visit a friend with freedom.

Remember those days? Wasn't it great before all these restrictions, without all this fear. Weren't those people in A&E better off without all that protective equipment. Schools could function as schools, pubs could be crowded, we could visit our loved ones in care homes, we could go to the fireworks display or to the football game. One way systems were just for Milnsbridge and Ikea. Those were the days. Will we ever return to such simplicity of life? Wasn't life good back then?

Isn't it interesting how we seldom look at our current situation and think how good it is? We love to look back and reminisce. We like to look forward and dream. What about the present?

This time last year, did we know how lucky we were? Did we notice and count our blessings, did we pause in gratitude to give thanks to God. Did we appreciate our lives, our food, our homes, our clothes, our time, our friends, our family, our church, our relatively safe society, our keyworkers, our neighbours, our schools, our doctors' appointments, our handshakes, our travel, our visiting, our western high-standard of living, our freedoms, and our plentiful supply of toilet paper!

Let's not wait until the future to look back and think how good life was.

Let us see the wonder of life even now, whatever our circumstances.

Yes, it is good to look back, to remember the past.

Let us also remember to look at all we have right here, right now, and say thank you.

Almighty God, open our eyes to the blessings you give us, so that we may give thanks, and live to your glory. Amen.

## **Notices**

### **November**

1<sup>st</sup> November is All Saint's day in the morning. At 4pm we have a memorial All Souls service at St John's.

15<sup>th</sup> November, Longwood APCM

29<sup>th</sup> November, Golcar APCM

The APCMs (Annual Parochial Church Meetings) will be held in church. People will also be able to join in via phone and Zoom should they wish.

**December:** we are still working out what will be possible with our festive services.