

From The Rector:

Dear friends,

Happy New Year! It's got to be better than the last and I hope there are many good things in store for you all. Family and friends must be high on our list of priorities and if the pandemic has taught us anything, it's not to take anyone or anything for granted. All life is precious and we need to value each other and to keep in contact regularly.

Writing my Christmas cards in December, I was saddened to have to delete so many names from my address labels as former colleagues, friends and family had died. It suddenly hit me how many cards I write to people I haven't seen for years... in fact, the Christmas card is the only contact I have with them and they with me! I'm sure I'm not the only one who experiences this. My New Year Resolution is to make a point of making contact with all those who I rarely see and to re-establish friendships. A card once a year really isn't enough and I intend to do something about it. Yes, it will take time and effort to achieve this and my task has to be to make the time available and to simply make the effort!

For all of us, we have done some hard thinking about our lives. We've had a bit more time on our hands and the same four walls to stimulate us! We have re-examined our priorities and are trying to find some solutions to address our concerns. Not easy to do, but a very valuable exercise.

I'm always impressed, as I read the gospel stories, how Jesus never turns anyone away and he always notices those who need his attention. There was a woman who was too frightened to speak to him and just wanted to touch the hem of his garment. He noticed her and a conversation ensued. There was another woman who was a despised foreigner who was drawing water at the well and she was so surprised that Jesus, the Jew, spoke to her and they had a very illuminating discussion! There was a blind man in a crowd who wanted to see Jesus, but he couldn't see him and no one would take him to Jesus. Jesus noticed him and again, a fabulous conversation resulted.

The example is there for us to see. Reach out to those we know and love; reach out to those on the margins of our lives; reach out to those who are little more than occasional acquaintances. In the Letter to the Hebrews, we read, *"Do not forget to entertain strangers...., for by so doing, some have entertained angels unawares."* (Hebrews 13 v.2) There are plenty of angels out there who are just waiting to have friendship initiated or renewed. Let's make it our resolution to engage more fully with those who are in our lives and those who we know, but generally tend to ignore. Make 2021 a year of friendship and a year of great joy.

Yours sincerely,

Fr. Keith