



St Mark's Church, Reigate

November 2020

Letter from the Vicar, Father Martin Colton

Dear Friends,

November is a month of remembering. We remember our own loved ones departed on All Souls' Day and we remember those who made the ultimate sacrifice in war for our freedom on Remembrance Sunday. These events remind us of times of change in the past, but also help us to reflect on change in our lives today.

Change can be difficult and challenging for most of us. 2020 has been a challenging and different year to the one we possibly had planned, and we still do not know how the rest of it will pan out in the shadow of the pandemic. Whatever happens in our own lives, the church, and even in the world we are all going to face change at some point or other. Change can be a difficult thing to face and we may resist it at all costs. It may be that we go along with the changes but do so grudgingly, constantly looking back at how things were before. In this way we never really move on. We miss out on the new opportunities that could be exciting or help us to grow and flourish personally or as a community.

However, there is another way, and that is to embrace the changes and challenges to be faced. To accept that, with help, we may gradually adapt to the changes, rise to the challenges, and see them as a good thing, both personally and for the community around us. Sometimes we can see that change needs to occur in ourselves or the world, but we cannot necessarily see the way forward to bring about the changes or rise to the challenges. Our lives and the world around us continue to develop and change at a rapid pace especially at this current time. We can be left feeling that something is missing, or our lives are unfulfilled. That 'something' we or those around us are searching for is not found in the material world.

Jesus said to his disciples the night before he died, as they too faced change and uncertainty, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life" (John 14.6). Jesus is saying that he is the way to God. That through him we see what God is like, and how God wants us to be. That by following him we can come into God's presence and find true life. Life that is everlasting and will sustain us whatever changes or challenges we face. Jesus is saying that in him, in God, we find that 'something' we are searching for that completes our lives.

With all the changes and challenges we may face as time goes on, let us remember

that we do so together as a church and a community, as friends and neighbours. May we also give thanks to God that we do not approach them in our own strength, but in knowing that the ever present and loving God is there beside us and walking with us as we journey together, and as we face the changes and challenges given to us.

With every blessing.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mantle". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.