

# Vicar's Pastoral Letter

**Date :** February 2009  
**Author :** Rev. Peter Holzapfel, St. Mary's Church, Kempsey, Worcester.  
**Subject :** An offer of support and prayer in the current difficult times.

Dear Friends,

On Saturday 7<sup>th</sup> February between 10:30am and 12:30pm St. Mary's Church in Kempsey will be open for anyone to pop in who is experiencing any difficulties concerning the current financial crisis that is touching the lives of so many people: indeed all of us are affected to some degree. It may be that your pension is not worth what it was, that you have been made redundant or that your business is in jeopardy. It may be that you're finding it tough to make ends meet. Whatever the situation or concern, we want you to know that we are here to support and to offer practical help and advice. It won't be just tea and sympathy although the kettle will be on and they'll be refreshments for anyone who wants to drop in. There will be the opportunity to share privately and your circumstances will be kept confidential. St. Mary's will be open for anyone in our United Benefice and that includes everyone who lives within the parish of St. Denys' at Severn Stoke. Do feel free to pop in whether it's for ten minutes or longer and we can assure you of a genuine and warm welcome.

One thing that will be on offer to anyone who wants it will be the opportunity to pray about matters that concern you. Your first reaction to this might be that prayer is just talk and that it doesn't achieve anything and you might recall prayers that you've made in the past that haven't been answered in the way that you have asked for. Sometimes prayer can be a profound disappointment but I do urge you to reconsider and not to give up bringing your needs and concerns before our heavenly Father. There is far more to this life than just what we see and another world that is operating at the same time as our own. Despite all that you experience of pain and loss there is a God who loves you and who has not forsaken or abandoned you. It is difficult, almost at times impossible, to hold on to this truth when you're in the midst of pain and confusion. Jesus Himself on the Cross cried out "My God, why have you forsaken me?" but three days after He died it was proved beyond doubt that His Father God had not abandoned Him when He rose from the dead and appeared to His disciples and many others. This is the victory of love over hate, the victory of the God's acceptance over the world's rejection and the victory of Life over death.

I believe that this victory can also be yours and mine whatever the current circumstances of our lives because no matter how dark the night might seem the light of God's presence and love has not been extinguished. This is our hope as human beings and without it we are indeed lost. Recent events show us that human ingenuity and brilliance can only take us so far but the resourcefulness of God and His love goes on for ever. There is never a recession of God's Truth, Love and Power and it will always be there for you. There is no credit crunch in heaven for the Love of God is not obtained on credit but is God's free gift to all of us. It is free but it's not cheap and the cost to us is that we have faith and go on believing which is high cost considering the pain and uncertainty that many people have to endure. The value of continuing to believe and to pray, however, is considerable and it can never be devalued for there is that which no amount of money can buy: the freedom, forgiveness, peace and love of God and the opportunity for all of us to have a new start.

The choice is yours but the inestimable gift of God's love and the new life that He alone can give is on offer to each and every one of us. He can and will raise you above your circumstances if you let Him. Another thing that is happening on **Monday 23<sup>rd</sup> of February at 6.30pm at St. Mary's House is an initial meeting for anyone who would like to find out more about The Christian faith. No previous experience or knowledge is required and all enquirers will be most welcome with no pressure and no strings attached. All you have to want to do is to find out more about what God can offer you and then, over time, decide whether it's for you or not. I shall be leading the course and at the first meeting we shall discuss what day and time is best for you to meet. It would be good to see you and I promise that it will be interesting, enjoyable**

**and very relaxed. I hope you can make it but if you can't but would still like to be involved then please leave me a message on 820202.**

There's a lot going on and a lot going wrong in the world at the moment and it may well be touching your life. If it is then please know that there is He who is above all our troubles and that if you let Him then He will open up a whole new future and one which nothing can de-value or take away.

With every blessing and prayer that you will take us up on these two invitations.

*Peter*

Rev. Peter Holzapfel

[vicar@stmaryskempsey.org.uk](mailto:vicar@stmaryskempsey.org.uk)

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

### **MUSIC AT ST. MARY'S CHURCH**

It has recently come to my attention that there is a rumour circulating that, and I quote, "Peter has sacked the Church organist, that he intends to get rid of the choir but it doesn't matter because the church are going to purchase a set of music CD's to cover all the hymns." I wish to point out in the strongest terms that this statement is unfounded and untrue.

It is true, as I have shared with the congregation, that myself and David Anfield, our Musical Director, have experienced difficulties but these are being addressed and hopefully a conclusion will be reached which is in accordance with God's will. David is currently on a sabbatical from his involvement with St. Mary's Church as he is soon to have an operation on his knee which will restrict his movements for a while. We wish him every success with his operation and pray that it will not be too long before he is up and about again. I have not "sacked" David because I don't have the authority, nor do I seek it, to "sack" anyone

I have no intentions whatsoever of "getting rid of the choir" and, in fact, just the opposite want to see our excellent choir used more and more. I have always valued the choir greatly and much appreciate the contribution that they make to our worship as I have frequently told them. As far as CD's are concerned this has never been put forward as an option and, in the event of David not returning as our Musical Director, I would urge the PCC to advertise for another Organist and Choir Master at the earliest opportunity. This is the true situation and I would appreciate it that if you hear anything to the contrary that you gently put it right. In the meantime the worship life of St. Mary's will continue uninterrupted, music will be provided and we shall continue in every way to seek God's will for the future and to press on with the many many good things that are happening for which we give God both thanks and praise.

*Peter*

Rev. Peter Holzapfel