

Blessed Thoughts and Thanks

from a Couple Shielding during the Pandemic

The last few months of lockdown and shielding have been tough!

Times have been really tough when we couldn't see, hug or kiss one of our children or grandchildren, and we still can't; tough when we weren't able to visit a critically ill friend in hospital; say goodbye to a close friend who had died; or when we couldn't celebrate a significant birthday of a loved one; and tough when depression has loomed and pain and fatigue have become a sharp reality.

In some strange way though, through these deeply challenging times, we have also realised just how blessed our lives are!

Our children, our grandchildren, our wider family members and our friends have become even greater blessings. The depth of their love, support and friendship for us during these challenging times has been and is a 'real' blessing.

During these last few months of shielding, our understanding of being blessed has been highlighted in so many ways:

Blessed are those who have phoned, emailed or texted us

Blessed are those who have sent us cards and letters

Blessed are those who have collected prescriptions for us

Blessed are our neighbours who have frequently asked us how we are

Blessed are those who have shopped for us

Blessed are those who have visited us; some in sunshine, some in rain

Blessed are those who have delivered us post and taken our post

Blessed are those who have held us in prayer

Blessed are those who have supported the bereaved

Blessed are those key workers in our hospitals and care homes who have done so much in such unprecedented times

Blessed are those who have produced the weekly parish newsletter and distributed it electronically or through the letter box

Blessed are those who have continued supporting and working for our local food bank

Blessed are those who have developed technology to bring streamed services from churches and cathedrals

Blessed are those who have kept schools open throughout this time

Blessed are those who have delivered essential food and those who have worked in our food shops and supermarkets

Blessed are those who have maintained essential services such as the police, and our waste and recycling collections

Blessed are those who have 'kept an eye' on our empty churches

Blessed are those who are helping those of us shielding to manage our vulnerability and anxiety

Blessed are those who are trying to bring hope for a very uncertain future

The building we call 'church' may be closed but the presence of God is still as active in the world as ever.

Whatever the future holds, whether we have a second wave of COVID 19 or another pandemic, may we all receive blessing upon blessing.

We all have our own power to bless, to heal and to renew each other. Through our 'ordinary' blessings may the world become a kinder, more loving place to live.

With our sincere thanks to all those who have blessed us. In friendship, love and prayer and for all that lies ahead

Sue and Frank McDermott (Catfield, July 1st 2020)