

CONVERSATIONS

Meeting 104
March 2021

1. Do you welcome Lent, resist it or find it something of a chore? Can you see it as identifying with Jesus' 40 days in the wilderness preparing for his mission? It's not meant to be easy, but it is sacred and we're joining ourselves to the Lord. Does this help?
2. Do you have a fixed task during Lent or are you open to changing it if there is something more relevant you can see that would be worth a try? Do you simply begin again if you've forgotten or failed to do your Lenten task? Do begin again or change your task to something more manageable.
3. Who has been a help to you during the months of the pandemic? How have they helped? Who have you helped and how have you done it?
4. Are you OK about putting up with restrictions required for safety during this strange time? What has it taught you about yourself? Can you link that into Lent?
5. Most people recognize that things will not get back to the old normal. What will change for you? What will you change? What have you learnt so far?
6. Are you cheered by new growth in the gardens and on the trees as spring begins to show itself? Are you helped in your feelings about the roll out of the vaccine? How do you express being positive?
7. Jesus fed people. He expects the same of us. Will you consider a regular donation of food or money to our foodbank and crisis work?

Thank You

Reflecting on Laudato Si and the Catholic global movement.

Mike and I signed up for the reflective evenings during Lent with the Catholic climate global movement. It is being held on-line via zoom, each Thursday evening over Lent for an hour.

I have always been interested in the environment, an active recycler since the 1980's and enjoyer of outdoor life. Like many I have been disturbed by the many programmes such as Blue Planet by David Attenborough and encouraged to think about the environment. What was highlighted during the first session held, was that knowing about climate change is not enough. There is scientific evidence now to show that since the 1980's our knowledge of climate change has not resulted in any positive actions, in fact it has been shown that climate change has been exacerbated and worsened. Our consumerism behaviour such as buying in the supermarket and travel for holidays, business and education, among many other areas, has resulted in more emissions.

More recently, what has been interesting, is that during the first Lockdown due to Covid 19, almost a year ago, it was reported that emissions from travel had significantly reduced, confirming what we already knew. The ethical dilemma for many of us now comes with a need to live and work in the 'modern world' whilst balancing an ecological life. Last year Mike and I started to plant vegetables and consider what plants would help with maintaining life, particularly, butterflies and bees important pollinators, much needed to support our food chain.

Feelings of powerless came with the reflection of such an enormous task, as we ask "what can I do?" We are being encouraged to try and make small changes in our lives, to do this we need to reflect consciously on our own actions and behaviours. We all buy food and clothing, so we can consider each time we shop what we are buying and where it came from, before it arrived in the shop and our shopping basket. Where does the meat come from? labelling is often missing so we aren't aware. We are told that many animals are not cared for humanely, simply reared in cramped conditions for eventual slaughter. Consider the eggs we buy, are they from hens roaming free or being caged? These are just a couple of things that immediately come to mind.

Pope Francis in his writing in 'Laudato Si' challenges us to see Christ in every living thing. If we begin to think this way, we must consider our relationship with everything we come into contact with each day. This continues throughout our lifetime. This is no small challenge, but is a learning process of change.

With lockdown I have heard so many references to the importance of mental health and wellbeing, it has never in my lifetime seemed so talked about. Each of us has had to find ways of coping during the restrictions and so many have turned to outdoors, either walking or growing plants. Perhaps this time of slowing down is what we needed to take stock of what is really important to us, which also includes valuing our closest relationships such as family and friends. Being present each day to what is around, certainly has helped me and just hearing the birds singing and seeing the plants starting to re-grow reminds me of the cycle of life which is always happening.

If anyone wants any further information about the evenings of reflection which can still be signed up to please let me know. Or if anyone has ideas that we could think about, might help us to make some small changes together.

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