

Dear friends

Firstly, some big thank-yous! We held two joyous services yesterday morning, and they only happened because so many people joined in and helped. You may or may not have noticed that the livestreaming was done by Jacob going 'solo' for the first time, or that Edith saved the day by operating the words for the screen. Beautiful intercessions at both services, wonderful music at the second and a stirring and thoughtful sermon from Alison. And many more jobs were done and appreciated just as much – I am not going to name them all.

Right now, as we begin this interregnum, there is an opportunity for people to try some different roles in church. You might well try something and decide it is not for you, and move on to something else. Or you might just find the right thing first time! How wonderful would it be to have teams of people ready to take on each role, so sharing the load week by week, and all in place before a new vicar has been discerned? Alison spoke about the need for some people to think about a social committee, which can be a regular role, or a one-off role. Do please speak to her over the coming weeks if you can think of something that might be fun to do together.

But yesterday was also the celebration of Ignatius of Loyola. Ignatian spirituality can be really interesting, a very reflective way of looking at ourselves and our spirituality. You might like to try a very simple exercise. Sit down calmly – be relaxed and have nothing to disturb you. Then cast your mind back over the previous hour. Think about exactly what you did, minute by minute if you can. (If that's too easy, go further back and cover the previous 24 hours). Where are the points in that time where you allowed God to lead you? And where are the points where you did not feel God's presence? Where did you do something that may have caused offence to God (or someone else)? And how can you improve over the next 24 hours? Not strictly one of the Spiritual Exercises for which Ignatius is remembered, but a good start. It is harder than you might think.

Bringing God along on the journey with us will not only support us spiritually during this interregnum, but can help us in our task of discerning the ways in which St Matthew's can do God's work in the coming months and the skills we need in a new leader to travel with us.

May your week be one fully of thought and prayer as you focus your mind on how you can help in this process.

Every blessing

Linda