

8 March 2021



THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK

They say that March comes in like a lion and goes out like a lamb. While this proverb is about the weather, it emphasises that things change during the month of March. Plants, birds and animals that weren't there at the beginning are there by the end as winter gives way to spring.

This year we are hoping that it won't just be the weather that gets better throughout March. As more and more people are vaccinated, and the benefits of months of restrictions continue to bear fruit, we hope that rates of covid infection, hospitalisation and deaths will continue their improving trend.

Regardless of the date of Easter Sunday, most of Lent always falls in March. Starting with the penitence and self-denial of Ash Wednesday, things could not be more different by the end of Lent when we celebrate our reconciliation with God through Christ's glorious resurrection from the dead.

In 2 Corinthians chapter 5 Paul writes 'Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: the old has gone, the new is here!' We hope to have many 'new' experiences this spring, even though they are things we took for granted before, and we should thank God for each one. The first of these is today's return to school for pupils in England. Many thousands of parents throughout the land will have a new appreciation today for schools and teachers that only one year ago seemed like an ordinary part of everyday life.

It is probably a long time since any of us attended a baptism or christening, but the symbolism of this ancient Christian ritual mirrors the season of Lent as we die to the old self in the waters of baptism before being raised as new children of God. Paul, again, in Romans chapter 6 says 'We were therefore buried with him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life.'

I pray that we will be able to rejoice together this Lent and Easter with newly reinstated freedoms, and that our lives will be infused with the joy of the new as we celebrate the risen Christ's resurrection victory.

Produced by Richard Hopkins

