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Parish: Our Lady of Compassion

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Dear Friends

We all feel the need to be as connected as possible in these difficult days. Isolation is not good or healthy for any of us, so we are thankful for a TV, a phone or a computer to help us realise that we are not completely alone. But when it comes to watching TV, I am realising that there is so much negativity and prophecies of doom around that we can get dragged down very quickly without realising it.

Last week, a parishioner suggested that I might want to watch 'Winterwatch' on the BBC. It broadcast every weekday evening last week and will broadcast again for one more week. I was told it is 'healing for the soul' and after watching it I totally agree! It is simply a programme which observes the day and night time activity of animals at this time of year. It is striking to see how nature just continues its course as normal, despite the global health emergency. It is such a beautiful and reassuring programme, and very 'healing' too. I recommend it!

There has been much written about the disconnection between humans and nature. The technology revolution has certainly benefited us all, particularly now. But with it has come a certain blindness to the beauty of nature around us. And not just that. We are learning again about our deep connectedness to nature, our essential place in it, our responsibility to nurture, protect and care for what has been entrusted to us. This has been one of the great lessons of the pandemic. Here in Formby, we are incredibly fortunate to live in such a beautiful natural environment. Judging by the numbers that continue to visit even now, many seem to agree.

It is not just a question of appreciating nature, of being thankful for it, but of realising our essential place as part of it. We need it. It needs us. We are aware of our responsibility to respect the countryside and look after it. But perhaps we also have a responsibility to get into it, to walk, to see, to take it all in, to realise our sense of belonging. Surely, this is the best way to raise our spirits, encourage us to greater hope and positivity, and to help us to pray!

It is true that we need each other. We realise this more than ever. Thankfully we have more means than ever to connect. But we also need nature, the animals, all created things. If we can walk, maybe we should start to get out there and be a greater part of it all. If we cannot walk, maybe we can watch programmes that give us an insight into nature and it's incredible beauty. I realise that I am probably preaching to the converted here! Many of you probably walk already, and judging by the beautiful gardens I have seen and experienced in our parish, many of you already live and appreciate nature. But we can always do a little more, appreciate a little more deeply.



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Everything I am saying to you in this letter is expressed much better in the Book of Genesis, the first book of the Bible. There, we read that God created everything and that the crown of His creation was the human being. We are also told that He saw that all He had made and found that it was 'good' and entrusted its care to us. Let us offer thanks to our Father God who has made this incredible world in all its wonder and beauty to reflect His glory. Let us resolve to take greater care of nature, and indeed of one another. All has come from the hand of God. May His Name be glorified in all His Creation, now and for ever!

May God bless you and your loved ones.

Father John



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