



**Image of the day - a Dublin morning**

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## Continue to communicate the language of love and hope across all barriers and boundaries say Bishops of Clogher



*The Church of Ireland Bishop of Clogher, the Rt Revd Dr Ian Ellis, and the Roman Catholic Bishop of Clogher, the Most Revd Larry Duffy, have issued the following statement to mark the Feast of Pentecost:*

**One of the great marks of the first Pentecost was the ability the Holy Spirit gave the apostles to speak across barriers of language of the works of God.**

The Spirit today gives the people of God the same ability to speak as one across all kinds of barriers and boundaries. We rejoice today that we can speak together to both our

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church communities and beyond with a common message of hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

We are however disappointed that for a second year we are unable to mark this great feast by coming together for our Ecumenical Service of Prayer, as we have done for almost 20 years. This service allows us to give thanks and praise together to God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Please God, next year this might again be possible.

Speaking together about the goodness of God across barriers is an important expression of the language of hope. This is so important as we begin the journey of recovery from the impact of coronavirus. There has been much suffering; the loss of loved ones, illness, financial challenge and isolation. We all need to hear the healing and strengthening words of Christ *'Come unto me all who are weary and heavy laden, and I will give you rest'*.

During the pandemic we quickly realised how important communication is when we were denied those simple non-verbal qualities of close contact and touch. We discovered how much we need the warmth of the love of our family and friends. The telephone and internet became our key means of keeping in touch and we thank God for these technological aids that kept us connected. Crucially, we learned how much we are indebted to medical staff, nurses, key workers and volunteers who have communicated dedication, care and love to the community through their skill and acts of kindness.

We must continue to communicate the language of love and hope across all barriers and boundaries. It would be so easy after this long period of restrictions to move to despair



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and lose hope. Yet we believe there are signs of new life all around us in the vaccination programme and the good response to public health guidance. Let us encourage one another to communicate the hope that by God's help, our common life will slowly return, and together seek his grace to renew our lives.

So we pray that the Holy Spirit of Pentecost may inspire us so that we communicate in our words and deeds the hope we have in God. May we as Christian people, speak of our belief in the transforming power of God, and by his Spirit to work together for the rebuilding and re-energising of our churches and society.

May the Spirit of God fill us with all joy, hope and peace.

## **Scots Moderator encourages congregations to get involved with Queen's Jubilee tree planting project**

**Rt Rev Dr Martin Fair, Moderator of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, is joining with other faith leaders in the UK to encourage people to take part in a tree planting project marking the Queen's Platinum Jubilee.**

The Queen's Green Canopy campaign will form part of the celebrations honouring 70 years since Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II's accession to the throne.

In a special video message, Dr Fair joined the Archbishop of Canterbury and leaders from the Buddhist Society, the Interfaith Council for Wales, Al-Khoei Foundation, Nishkam Centre, the United Hebrew Congregations of Great Britain



### Rt Rev Dr Martin Fair

and the Commonwealth, the Hindu Council UK, the Moravian Church of Northern Ireland, and the Mosques and Imams National Advisory Board, encouraged people to 'plant a Tree for the Jubilee' in 2022.

As well as inviting the planting of new trees, The Queen's Green Canopy will highlight and showcase 70 irreplaceable ancient Woodlands across the United Kingdom and identify 70 ancient trees to celebrate Her Majesty's 70 years of service.

Speaking about the project, Dr Fair said:

"This is a wonderful idea! It will allow us to celebrate the Queen's Platinum Jubilee whilst making a powerful statement about our concern for the future of our planet.

"Planting trees is always an act of faith and an investment in the lives of those who will come after us.

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"Let's go for this enthusiastically."

It is hoped that The Queen's Green Canopy campaign will see churches, communities, charities, schools, and councils across the four nations create a lasting legacy that will enhance our environment and the landscape for generations to come.

Those who are interested in taking part are encouraged to plant healthy native trees that will thrive in their environments, and for best results it's recommended that trees are put in the ground between October and March.

Throughout her reign, The Queen has planted more than 1,500 trees all over the world and has spoken alongside Sir David Attenborough of the importance of trees in Earth's future.

The global coronavirus pandemic has been a challenging time which has profoundly changed our lives and generated a much greater public awareness of the need for green space.

The Queen's Green Canopy project will encourage people to come together with the common purpose of 'greening' their local and national environments.

Very Rev Professor David Fergusson, Dean of the Chapel Royal in Scotland, said: "The Queen's Green Canopy Campaign is a timely and exciting project.

"In supporting her commitment to conserving the natural landscape for future generations, this initiative will provide a most fitting celebration of The Queen's long and distinguished reign."

## **Continue to “build back better” in the parishes which lie so close to your hearts - Archbishop McDowell in Ascensiontide message**

*The following pastoral letter from the Most Revd John McDowell, Archbishop of Armagh and Primate of All Ireland, was read at parishes in the Diocese of Armagh last Sunday (16th May), the Sunday after Ascension:*

Brothers and sisters in Christ, As a Church family we have come through a great deal since St Patrick’s Day 2020 when the first lockdown came into effect. Many restrictions, a number of subsequent lockdowns and all the weariness these have brought. For centuries parish churches have stayed together by worshipping together, so not being able to do that (at least as we would have wished) had the potential to cause a great deal of long term damage to parish life.

I know that as individuals many people have suffered much, with demoralising periods of isolation, lack of contact with those who we love and even desolating bereavements. But as a Church we have come through this dark period a good deal better than most people anticipated. I was able to thank the clergy for the part they played in that effort in a Zoom meeting last week.

Unfortunately it’s not possible to accommodate the whole Diocese on a Zoom call, so I have written this short Pastoral Letter to be read out on 16 May, the Sunday after The





**Most Revd John McDowell, Archbishop of Armagh and Primate of All Ireland**

Ascension Day. I simply want to say a very heartfelt “thank you” to every parishioner in the Diocese. Thank you for your faithfulness to God and His Church and for living out your vocation as disciples of Jesus Christ during a very uncertain time. Thank you for finding ways of sustaining the Church by online participation, by community involvement, and by giving of your substance as you have always done. These have been testing times for parishes and you have not allowed the test to wholly overwhelm you. Perhaps it’s a little bit of an exaggerated parallel but I think we can look to St Paul’s words in 2 Corinthians for inspiration “...we are hard pressed on all sides but not crushed; perplexed but not in despair....struck down but not destroyed...”

We can say this only because you have been faithful, and have done what you could to maintain the life of your parishes. When we could not meet I have no doubt you prayed and persevered. When we returned to worship,



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those of you who were able, came back with joy. As far as I can tell you have served God and your parishes cheerfully. And God loves a cheerful giver.

That is not to say that everything will soon return to the way it always has been; or even as it was on St Patrick's Day 2020. There could yet be setbacks. And as a very wise Irishman once said "Things must change in order to remain the same". We cannot say with 100% confidence that Covid-19 has been defeated; but it has not beaten us in our believing lives. The terrible scenes in other countries, and especially in India, are truly heart rending and I know that we will all be doing what we can to relieve that suffering. But for now, for us, thank you for all you have done and I trust will continue to do to "build back better" in the parishes which lie so close to your hearts, and for the God who you love and serve. It is my sincere prayer that you can have a refreshing summer, enjoying the beauties of our own countryside and seaside and that you can join with me in saying "Thanks be to God".

## **Hopeful planning by Summer Madness**

[Summer Madness](#) is planning on running a three-day non-residential event in 2021 at the Ulster University in Coleraine on Friday July 2, Saturday July 3 and Sunday July 4.

Youth groups can sign up to attend on one or on all days and it will cost £12.50 for a day ticket. A refund will be given if the event cannot take place.

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All information can be found on the Summer Madness app which can be downloaded or access here:

[www.madapps.uk/sm/app](http://www.madapps.uk/sm/app).

## **Anglican Archbishop in Jerusalem calls for global prayer following eruption of violence**

*Archbishop Hosam Naoum calls on members of the Anglican Communion, and all Christians, to pray for the peace of Jerusalem.*

The Anglican Archbishop in Jerusalem, Hosam Naoum, has called on Anglicans and all Christians to pray in response to the eruption of violence in the Holy Land. Archbishop Hosam was installed as Archbishop during a service at Saint George's Cathedral in Jerusalem on Ascension Day last week. He succeeds Archbishop Suheil Dawani, who has retired.

In a statement issued this week, Archbishop Hosam said: “over the past week, we have seen the rapid escalation of violence throughout the Holy Land: in the air attacks launched against Gaza and Central Israel, in the rioting between extremists in ethnically mixed cities, and in the continuing conflicts between protesters and police over the pending evictions in the Sheikh Jarrah neighbourhood, of which Saint George's Cathedral is a part. It is particularly disheartening that this violence erupted out of police disrespect of Muslim sacred sites and traditions in Jerusalem during the various religious feasts.

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“We know from sad experience that violence and hatred will never lead to solutions to the deep ethnic and religious divisions that have afflicted this region now for a century. We therefore call upon the authorities on both sides to agree to an immediate ceasefire in the Gaza conflict in order to end the rain of death and destruction that has had tragic consequences for thousands of individuals and families.

“We also call on Israeli authorities to restore order and calm within the ethnically mixed cities where rioting has broken out, so that the human and civil rights of all are protected equally. Finally, we call upon the United Nations and the international community to work with all parties to seriously address the underlying injustices and grievances that have led to this latest unrest in a recurring cycle of violence, working for a just and lasting peace between Palestinians and Israelis that incorporates a viable Two-State Solution.”

He continued: “In the meantime, the Episcopal Diocese of Jerusalem is continuing its Christian mission of bringing healing to the wounded, relief to those who have lost their homes and livelihoods, and comfort to those who mourn the loss of loved ones. Al Ahli Hospital in Gaza has been on the frontlines of these relief efforts, becoming a beacon of hope to those trying to remain alive under such dire circumstances.

“But they are overwhelmed and in desperate need of upwards of 1.6 million USD to obtain fuel for hospital generators, and to purchase emergency medicine and medical supplies so that the doctors and nurses who are working around the clock can meet the crushing flow of injured and traumatized victims in this conflict.





The Rev. Tony Murphy's Sponsored Walk for the Cork, Cloyne and Ross Burundi Maize Project brought him to the Parish of Dunmanaway - alleged to be the wettest in Ireland!

“I therefore issue an appeal to our international partners and all people of goodwill to support this humanitarian mission through their generous contributions to Al Ahli Hospital, enabling them to show forth the compassionate love of Christ in real and tangible ways in these desperate circumstances.”

Archbishop Hosam concluded his statement with a prayer, saying: “I ask those within the Anglican Communion and all



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of Christendom to join with us in offering the following prayer”.

*Almighty and Everlasting God:  
Our days are in your hands;  
we lift up all those in the Holy Land who are victims of  
violence and injustice,  
that you might empower your Church  
to bring healing to the wounded,  
relief to the suffering,  
and comfort to those who mourn;  
we pray also that you would soften the hearts of all those  
involved in the recent conflicts,  
that they would be led to work for justice and lasting peace  
in the land where your Son,  
our Lord Jesus Christ first came to bring hope and abundant  
life to all people;  
these things we ask in his Holy Name. Amen.*

## **Opinion - Ireland has realised it overreached on Brexit - Ruth Dudley Edwards**

**A new DUP leader and the anger of Unionists have opened Dublin’s eyes to its border miscalculation, Ruth Dudley-Edwards writes in The Daily Telegraph**

My message to our friends in Europe,” wrote Brexit minister Lord Frost on Sunday, “is: stop the point-scoring and work with us. Seize the moment, help find a new approach to

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Northern Ireland, and then we can build a new relationship for the future.”

But will the EU listen? The stakes, now, are very high. Brussels has chosen to implement the Northern Ireland Protocol in the most damaging manner possible. And it's not just the UK that is concerned about the effect this is having on Unionist opinion. After spending the Brexit talks acting as a cheerleader for the EU's most hard-line demands, the signs are that, under the eminently reasonable Taoiseach, Fianna Fáil's Micheál Martin, the Irish government has come to recognise that it overreached disastrously.

It was under Martin's predecessor, Fine Gael's Leo Varadkar, and Simon Coveney, his foreign minister, that the Irish government helped to create the mess that is the protocol. At a period of resurgence of Anglophobia – paradoxically because of a feeling that Britain had betrayed Ireland by abandoning it – and afflicted by the frequent Irish mistaken belief that if you do what Brussels tells you, you will be rewarded, the two politicians overplayed their hand and unintentionally undermined the stability of the Good Friday Agreement.

The straightforward solution would have been to cooperate on technical fixes and put any customs hardware on the Irish side. Instead, the Irish raised the spectre of republican violence, which Michel Barnier seized on to present the EU as defenders of the Good Friday Agreement. It was a nonsensical argument. But it was so successful that some loyalists have now concluded that it may only be violence that can get rid of the border in the Irish Sea.

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While the Unionist community is law-abiding, the perception that Northern Ireland has been sacrificed by the British Government, and that there is a chance – as nationalists remind them daily – that the province could be forced into a United Ireland, strengthens the hard men who are encouraging protests and threatening worse.

The republic knows this would be a disaster, and if it were left to Martin, Brexit-related problems would be being amicably sorted out. But Brussels is making it clear that Ireland is only one of 27 voices in the EU. And there is fear in the republic that the European Commission will use as a bargaining tool its support for President Biden's push for a 21 per cent global corporation tax rate, which will strengthen the EU drive for tax harmonisation and threaten Ireland's 12.5 per cent corporation tax rate on which its prosperity over the past few decades has been largely dependent.

Martin has other troubles. Last year's general election was disastrous for Fianna Fáil and Fine Gael, lifelong enemies who have alternated in power ever since Ireland got its independence. Horrified by the prospect of allowing Sinn Féin into power, they made a deal to form an unprecedented coalition. Martin became Taoiseach in June with Varadkar as deputy and Coveney again as foreign minister: Martin and Varadkar will swap jobs in December 2022.

Sinn Féin are now the energetic and articulate official opposition, inspiring a young electorate with promises so reckless they would embarrass Jeremy Corbyn. Few under 40 care about the horrors of the Troubles, and they appear unreachable by the argument that a party that still extols IRA murders is unfit to govern a democracy. And Martin has a

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very active green opposition in his own party, and is in no position to risk another election.

There is some hope. Varadkar is subdued by an inquiry into a leaked document and even Coveney seems less gung-ho about the border than he used to be, so neither is likely to fight a compromise. There is regret that the protocol helped defenestrate the approachable Arlene Foster of the DUP and nervousness about how intransigent her successor, Edwin Poots, will be. There is also a new leader of the Ulster Unionist Party, Doug Beattie, a war hero, who, though liberal and non-sectarian, is a true Unionist and very tough.

So the ball is in the EU's court. Will Brussels grasp that if it doesn't accept Lord Frost's invitation it may destabilise the peace it has misused to its advantage? If not, the implications for the future of the island of Ireland are frightening.

Follow Ruth Dudley-Edwards on Twitter @RuthDE; read more at [telegraph.co.uk/opinion](https://www.telegraph.co.uk/opinion)

Courtesy The Daily Telegraph 18.05.2021

## **Books, Broadcasts, Resources and Webinars**

### **Ecumenical Prayer for Christian Unity and for the Future of Europe**

The Conference of European Churches and the Commission of the Bishops' Conferences of the European Union (COMECE) will hold an online ecumenical prayer meeting for Christian Unity and for the Future of





Europe on Friday 21 May 2021, from 10.00am to 11.00am (GMT). This event will be hosted by MEP Patrizia Toia, with a special message from the His All Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew I, with concluding words by European Parliament Vice–President, Roberta Metsola. A programme and link for registration is available <http://www.comece.eu/ecumenical-prayer-for-christian-unity-and-for-the-future-of-europe>

### **Short Reflection for Ascensiontide**

As part of a series of reflections and hymns from Christ Church Cathedral, Dublin and St Patrick’s Cathedral, Dublin. The Dean of Christ Church Cathedral, the Very Revd Dermot Dunne, offers this reflection on ‘Abundant Grace’. The Cathedral Choir sings an anthem by Elgar, ‘Rise of the Spirit’.

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<https://dublin.anglican.org/news/2021/05/19/a-short-reflection-for-ascensontide>

## **Rural halls refurbishment funding launched**

The Department of Agriculture Minister in NI has launched a funding scheme for Rural Hall Refurbishment.

This scheme will transform rural halls be they cultural, church, community etc spaces.

Funding of:

Minimum Amount - £15,000

Maximum Amount - £40,000

Level of support - Up to 95%

[https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/daera/Scheme%20Information%20and%20Stage%201%20Application%20Guidance%20Notes%2014%2005%202021\\_0.PDF?fbclid=IwAR0uKwsP-misSh6kU9I7aSBiOhmcB0qeroQKMzkm-KyLSGYAyAmCdqSLTGI](https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/daera/Scheme%20Information%20and%20Stage%201%20Application%20Guidance%20Notes%2014%2005%202021_0.PDF?fbclid=IwAR0uKwsP-misSh6kU9I7aSBiOhmcB0qeroQKMzkm-KyLSGYAyAmCdqSLTGI)

## **One-day conference looks at one hundred years of Northern Ireland.**

Speakers include: Prof Graham Walker, Mrs Carol Walker MBE, Mr Philip Orr, Dr Andrew Charles, Miss Molly Liggett, Mr Aaron Callan, Mr Stewart McClean and Mr Gordon Lucy. Topics include: Women and Ulster politics, the first election to the new NI Parliament, the foundation of Northern Ireland, the extraordinary political career of Harry Midgley, Southern Unionists and the forgotten counties, the first elections in

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Co. Londonderry and how the new Northern Ireland state strove to present itself to a wider world.

Venue: Via Zoom

Booking: Visit <https://www.eventbrite.com/o/the-ulster-history-project-17094393955>

## **Irish Methodist World Development & Relief**

This week's Prayer of Solidarity is for @irishmethodist WDR partner Kopila Nepal.

"God of Care,

You are concerned for those living in Nepal, a beautiful nation in its scenery and people."

Continues Down pointing backhand index

<https://buff.ly/2Xe1TN0>

## **Irish Women's Convention**

Save the date Ladies - Although the logistics of a conference remain to be seen we are very pleased to announce this year's Irish Women's Convention on Saturday the 9th October with the title "Abiding Joy". Save the date and watch this space with more details to follow.

## **Media review**

### **The future for the Irish Church post-pandemic**

The Tablet

Bishop Michael Duignan of Clonfert, the youngest bishop in the Irish bishops' conference, has spoken of the future for the Irish Church post-pandemic.

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[[] <https://www.thetablet.co.uk/news/14146/news-briefing-britain-and-ireland> ]

## **St. Macartin's Cathedral Enniskillen: Building has a long, rich past**

Impartial Reporter

The original church was enlarged and reconfigured in 1842. ... in Enniskillen was acknowledged, with regards to the Church of Ireland in the Diocese ... with Enniskillen becoming the first town in the United Kingdom to hear the news.

[[] <https://www.impartialreporter.com/news/19313375.st-macartins-cathedral-enniskillen-building-long-rich-past/> ]

## **Dozens of faith institutions divest from fossil fuels**

Independent Catholic News

... Diocese of Oxford, the first Church of England dioceses to announce their divestment from fossil fuels, together with the Church in Wales, the Baptist ...

[[] <https://www.indcatholicnews.com/news/42223> ]

## **Former top prosecutor appointed to lead safeguarding agency**

Independent Catholic News

The Catholic Bishops of England and Wales have appointed the former Chief Crown Prosecutor in the Rochdale grooming gang cases as the Chair of their new safeguarding agency. The appointment of Nazir Afzal as the Chair of the Catholic Safeguarding Standards Agency (CSSA) will be formally announced at an online press conference on the morning of Tuesday May 18. Mr Afzal has served as the Chief Crown

[[] <https://www.indcatholicnews.com/news/uk-ireland> ]

[churchnewsireland@gmail.org](mailto:churchnewsireland@gmail.org)



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## St Paul's Cathedral Covid memorial

Daly Mail

Update following launch earlier this month of campaign by St Paul's Cathedral in partnership with the Daily Mail to raise £2.3 million to build a memorial in St Paul's Cathedral for those who have died as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic

<https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-9593925/Daily-Mail-St-Pauls-Cathedrals-Covid-19-remembrance-campaign-reaches-300-000-donations.html>



## Pointers for prayer

Mighty God,  
in whom we know the power of redemption,  
you stand among us in the shadows of our time.  
As we move through every sorrow and trial of this life,  
uphold us with knowledge of the final morning  
when, in the glorious presence of your risen Son,  
we will share in his resurrection,  
redeemed and restored to the fullness of life

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and forever freed to be your people. Amen.

Living God,  
long ago, faithful women  
proclaimed the good news  
of Jesus' resurrection,  
and the world was changed forever.  
Teach us to keep faith with them,  
that our witness may be as bold,  
our love as deep,  
and our faith as true. Amen.

Creator of the universe,  
you made the world in beauty,  
and restore all things in glory  
through the victory of Jesus Christ.  
We pray that, wherever your image is still disfigured  
by poverty, sickness, selfishness, war and greed,  
the new creation in Jesus Christ may appear in justice, love,  
and peace,  
to the glory of your name. Amen.

O God, your Son remained with his disciples after his  
resurrection,  
teaching them to love all people as neighbours.  
As his disciples in this age,  
we offer our prayers on behalf of the universe  
in which we are privileged to live  
and our neighbours with whom we share it.  
Open our hearts to your power moving  
around us and between us and within us,  
until your glory is revealed in our love of both friend and  
enemy,

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in communities transformed by justice and compassion,  
and in the healing of all that is broken. Amen.

Holy God,  
you have called us to follow in the way of your risen Son,  
and to care for those who are our companions,  
not only with words of comfort, but with acts of love.  
Seeking to be true friends of all,  
we offer our prayers on behalf of the church and the world.  
Guide us in the path of discipleship,  
so that, as you have blessed us,  
we may be a blessing for others,

## Speaking to the Soul

When I was a child, I spoke and thought and reasoned as a child. But when I grew up, I put away childish things. Now we see things imperfectly, like puzzling reflections in a mirror, but then we will see everything with perfect clarity. All that I know now is partial and incomplete, but then I will know everything completely, just as God now knows me completely.

1 Corinthians 13:11-12 NLT

When I was about four years old I can recall being very confused when I met new people. I presumed that they had just been made, because I had never seen them before! I had recently tumbled to the fact that people die, and that was probably because one of my grandfathers died at around that time. I came up with a theory that God probably took the bits of dead people and used them to make the new people that I had just met. It was all very logical and, in its way, quite impressive. It just happened to be wrong!

When we are children, our minds struggle to understand the world around us and that's absolutely fine because we are children. If I had told you that it is still my view that God makes people out of those who have passed away you wouldn't think that was fine at all. You would, in your kindness, feel desperately sorry for me and, I trust, start praying for me. The fact is that our thinking and speaking changes as we get older. Many things that were a complete mystery to us as children are no longer mysterious. The fact is that, however old we are, we are still on a journey towards understanding. We all have a lot more to learn.

We need to draw two conclusions from this. Firstly, we need to be humble. We might know a lot, but we don't know everything. God hasn't revealed the whole truth to us, so we need to look at every day as an adventure on which we learn a little more about ourselves, our world and God. And secondly, we need to be excited by the thought that one day we will understand the whole picture.

## QUESTION

What new things have you learnt about God over the last month?

## PRAYER

Lord God our Father, thank you that you are constantly revealing more of yourself to us. Amen



