

newwt

schools café church
online issue 1



Welcome to online NEWT

We have lots more great pics and Art & Creativity stories that we're saving up to share as soon as movement is less restricted and we can deliver magazines again through schools and Newtown doors.



Winterval - Feb 2020

Creativity in a CRISIS

Did you enjoy Winterval Windows? Are you at home and feeling crafty again? Children in Spain have started drawing pictures of rainbows and displaying them in their windows as a symbol of hope. Jelly Art would like to encourage the WHOLE of Reading to fill their windows with rainbows and

when you're on your isolation approved walks, keeping 2 metres from any other people, you can play a giant game of I -spy 🕵️

Children and adults can all join in. Post your pictures on Facebook @Jelly or @Winterval Windows East Reading

Focus on

Art & Creativity



EASTER 2020

St John & St Stephen's, Newtown Community Magazine

Coping with **Social distancing** or *Isolation* **SOME TIPS FROM A NUN**

"The coronavirus is forcing many people across the world to stay home, limit outside contact - and in a way, start living life like cloistered nuns.

Of course, this virus is not good. Sickness never is. And I understand that this sudden shift in our society is frightening. As someone who has lived a life of separation, I'd like to share from my experience how you can make the best of it.

First, you need to establish structure.

Your normal day-to-day lives have structure imposed on them from the outside, giving you a sense of consistency and rhythm.

Now that you are stuck at home, create a schedule for yourself and your family. Of course, every household will be different. At the monastery, we wake up at the same time every day and get fully dressed (no pyjamas). We have planned time for prayer, worship, work, eating and fun. Our days usually have a peaceful rhythm.

Second, be intentional and love others.

It is easy to get caught up in making sure you and your loved ones are safe and your needs are met. We are in uncharted territory and these reactions are understandable. However, we should fight against self-centered urges. Call older people in your neighbourhood and ask how they are doing, if they need anything.

Give the gift of your time. Cook meals with your family and play games. Maybe this is a good opportunity for all of us to strengthen those family bonds, and our efforts will have an effect on the wider community.

Living in community takes work. It means learning to listen, forgive and accept each other.

Third, use this time for self-reflection and relaxation.

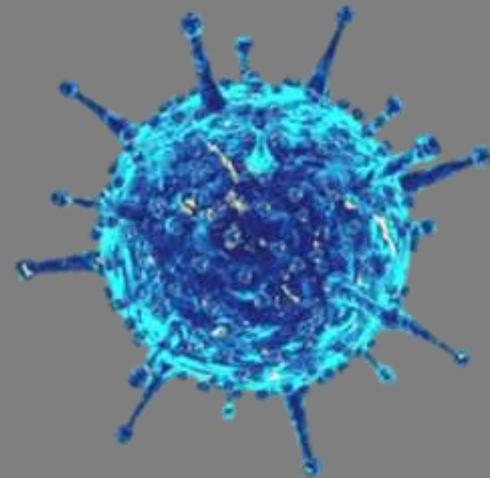
People say they want peace and quiet. Then when it is thrown in their lap, they

panic. They don't know how to be alone. They fill their lives with noise to run away from their emotions. Life isn't meant to be rushed. Use this time to get to know yourself. Stop. ... Be still.

You can either waste this period of social-distancing and just feel frustrated, or you can choose to make it the best it can be."



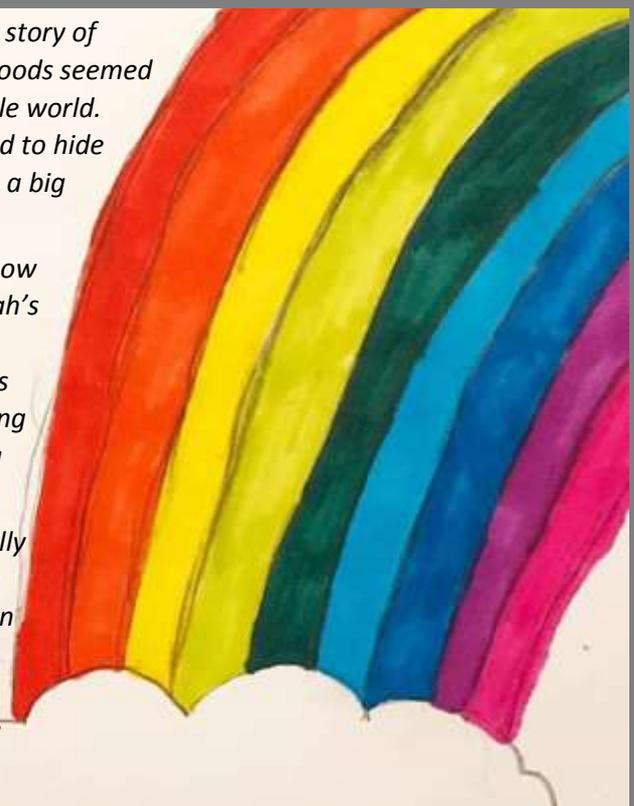
Sister Mary Catharine Perry has been a cloistered nun with the Dominican nuns in Summit, New Jersey, for 29 years. The above are extracts of advice she gave to news reporter Cassidy Grom, whose



Do you know the story of Noah? Terrible floods seemed to cover the whole world. Noah's family had to hide away in the Ark - a big covered boat.

God used a rainbow to keep alive Noah's family's hope of seeing the storms pass and of getting back outside to a normal life.

When it was finally over, the bow in the sky became a sign of God's promise always to save humanity, despite our faults.



We are all 'enlisted' in fighting this virus

Prime Minister Boris Johnson

What can we Do to Help? SOME EMERGING IDEAS

As Easter NEWT was due to go to press, daily announcements from the government have changed all our lives. TV and radio have become lifelines for up to date and accurate information, and when read this things will have moved on again.

But amongst all the change and concerns, there are many examples of people responding with creativity and compassion. So, here are a few ideas:

1. Reach out to neighbours

Many streets in and around our parish are organising practical help for those living near them e.g. collecting prescriptions or doing shopping for those who are self-isolating or not able to get out.

If there is nothing yet for your road, you may consider typing up something like the following to put through your neighbours' letter boxes; '

Hi Neighbours. I'm sorry it has taken a health emergency to get us to reach out, but here we are! My phone number is XXXXXXXXXX If you need groceries, or supplies and are stuck at home, we will happily leave them on your doorstep and see you when you're better. Even if you are OK for now, do give us a call to chat and so we don't worry about you.

2. Get accurate up to date info

Listen every day to TV or radio news. Only believe or pass on facts that you've checked are correct. There have been many frightening fake stories circulating on social media as well as bogus cures. But the Reality Checker at bbc.co.uk/news is a good place to check up on what's true . On Facebook, the *East Reading*

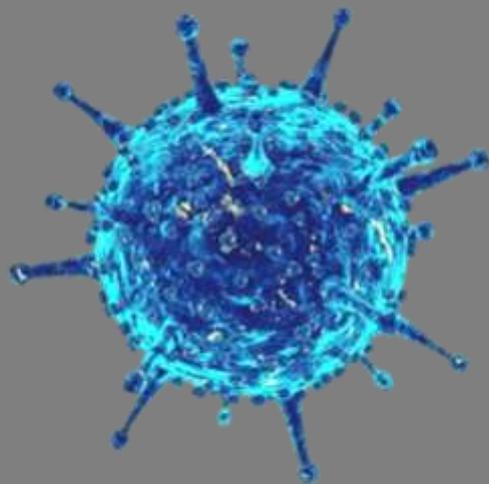


Community group is a well-established site for sharing local news and opportunities. It has over 1,200 members and is easy to join.

3. Consider volunteering

Local support charities like the *ReadiFood* food bank can usually rely on many pensioner volunteers. But with over 70s needing to keep themselves safe at home. They are in need of replacement drivers etc. as well as needing a continuing supply of food donations.

If you feel you could give some time to help others during this crisis, you can directly approach a charity you know. Or you can sign up with Reading Voluntary Action, who are there to co-ordinate a response across Reading's charities.





A very different *Easter* for Newtown

For the time being St John and St Stephen's church is closed. We are unable to offer public worship on Sundays. All our weekday activities are also suspended.

However, we can connect in other ways;

- You can request prayer
- You can ask to speak to one of our clergy
- You can find out how to access one of our virtual acts of worship
- You can receive weekly updates

Leave a message on the church answerphone on 0118 926 3633 or email office@stjohnandststephen.org.uk .

Normal service will be resumed as soon as possible!

Despite the shadow of the cross, Easter remains a reminder of hope.



Church Contacts



Vicar
Rev Claire Alcock



Assoc. Priest
Christine Bainbridge



Parish Centre Manager
Tanya Penn



Churchwardens
Rosie Croft & Ian Maynard

Parish Office 0118 926 3633
office@stjohnandststephen.org.uk

School Contacts



Head teacher
Polly Cornish



Deputy Head
Penny Cornish



Chief Executive of the Trust
Angharad Brackstone



Head teacher
Martina Parsons



Deputy Head
Kim Blythe

New Town School 0118 937 5509
[email:admin@newtown.reading.sch.uk](mailto:admin@newtown.reading.sch.uk)

St John's School 0118 937 5540
[email: admin@stjohns.reading.sch.uk](mailto:admin@stjohns.reading.sch.uk)