

What a privilege and pleasure it is to write to you as the Interim Diocesan Director of Education (DDE) for the Diocese of Derby – a role I certainly hadn't anticipated! When DDE in Coventry, I often reminded friends and colleagues that I was fortunate to have the 'best job in the diocese'! It was a post I held for 20 years until my retirement in August 2020 ... or so I thought!  said God!



Throughout my (long!) career in education, I often asked God why He had placed me in various schools, colleges, roles, locations etc.  I would hear God say!

The teaching, leadership & management and governance roles I have had have been a marvellous foundation for each step I have taken. Although faced with huge challenges at times, I have loved it all! My prayer is that this experience might resonate with you as, together, we embark upon a new calendar year, leaving the weird, difficult and enormously stressful 2020 behind.

 says God, "I am with you".

It is here that I wish to pay tribute to and offer my prayers for Dave Channon who I worked alongside as a fellow DDE pilgrim. Thanks are due too, of course, for Alison Brown. Both these servant-hearted and Christ-centred folks are such a blessing!



The beginning of January provides the church with the opportunity to celebrate Epiphany. It seems to me that it represents an  moment, a revelation or 'penny drop' experience...

a moment in time that generates a life-changing realisation that alters the rest of our 'yet to be told' story. Epiphany, in the Christian calendar, marks the end of the '12 Days of Christmas'; Advent calendars long-forgotten, gift wrappings in recycling bins, decorations packed away for another year...  I hear God say!

The Magi rejoiced when they saw the star.  said God.

"You have recognised my guiding light."

They entered the stable, saw the Christ-child and knelt to worship Him.  said God.

"You have recognised the reason for your journey."

They offered Him their gifts.  said God. "You understand the value of all you have to offer."

Epiphany is God's wonderful (or should that be wonder-filled?) revelation for each of us, encouraging us to find anew, the God-given revelation of life in all its fullness both for now and for eternity.

The Derby DBE Strategic Plan powerfully sets out its aims – Growing, Learning, Building Connections and Health and Well-being. There is so much potential for seeking and finding the  moments – times when lives are transformed with hope and aspiration.

I pray that, as we walk together this term, we might encounter God afresh, recognise in each other His wisdom, hope, dignity, community and love that bring about 'life in all its fullness' and experience those transformational  moments that please God and bring joy to others and ourselves.

A prayer for each of us

Christ our Lord, to whom kings bowed down in worship and offered gifts,  
we ask that you reveal to us His glory and pour upon us the riches of his grace  
that we might experience the revelation of your eternal life and love.

Amen