

**Thought for the week  
2nd Sunday of Lent  
28th February, 2021**

Lord Jesus Christ,  
our Divine Physician,  
we ask you to guard and protect us  
and all people from the  
coronavirus and all serious illness.

For all who have died from it ,  
have mercy;

For all who are ill now,  
bring healing;

For all searching for a remedy,  
enlighten them;

For medical caregivers, helping the sick,  
strengthen and shield them;

For all working to contain the spread,  
grant them success;

For those afraid,  
grant peace of mind.

By your grace,  
may you turn the evil of disease  
into moments of consolation and hope.

We abandon ourselves into your  
infinite mercy.  
Amen.

This year for my Lenten observance I have decided to walk the ‘Camino’. On a family holiday a few years ago we were lucky enough to visit Santiago de Compostela. We learnt that there was the special Jubilee Year in 2020 and my son Thomas was very taken with the idea of doing part of the walk ourselves. The last Jubilee year took place in 2010 when an estimated 100,000 pilgrims visited the shrine of St. James. We began to make tentative plans and were further inspired by the talk Deacon Brian’s son made which we both attended. Then Covid hit and any such undertaking was certainly on hold for the foreseeable future.

This all got me thinking about pilgrimages. The world in which we find ourselves is certainly not one in which pilgrimage in a traditional sense can easily or legally occur. Travel restrictions both nationally and internationally and curtailment of personal movement certainly do not seem conducive to the nature of pilgrimage. And yet, if we think a little more about the motivations behind pilgrimage perhaps the idea does not seem quite so foolish. Some people focus their pilgrimage around a particular intention, specifically meaningful to them, whereas other people don’t know what intention to choose, but are open to whatever the pilgrimage brings them, and are willing to be changed by it. A definition of ‘pilgrimage’ leads us to greater insight: “A **pilgrimage** is a journey, often into an unknown or foreign place, where a person goes in search of new or expanded meaning about their self, others, nature, or a higher good, through the experience. It can lead to a personal transformation, after which the [pilgrim](#) returns to their daily life.’ So could shorter, less ‘exotic’ journeys still be seen as a pilgrimage of sorts? I often find walking beneficial not only for physical health but mental well-being. Many people, in response to the difficulties of 2020, find that they now need to ‘find a new direction’. Perhaps many are also keen to spend more time outdoors in Britain, enjoying nature and the avoidance of crowds. Once lock-downs come to an end and travel restrictions are relaxed people may still choose such endeavours as holy places are often off the beaten track of ordinary tourism; their remoteness often making them naturally compliant with a world freshly coming out of longstanding COVID-19 restrictions. Throughout the last year I would argue that many journeys have also taken place in our lives, new challenges which we’ve had to embrace (IT being the most obvious example!) obstacles of missing friends and loved ones and enforced patience and acceptance as we have come to terms with our new ‘normal’. Personal transformations have certainly been a part of this.

So, however short or long your path, closeness to God can be achieved through such endeavours and transformations, even in small ways, as a result of the journeys we take. If it is God’s plan then I will help Thomas to achieve his wish when we are allowed, but until then I will keep going with my virtual pilgrimage. I am only 10% through my challenge but am hopeful that I will achieve my goal even if it does take me a little longer than the 40 days of Lent in which to achieve the full distance - I do hope St. James won’t mind!

A parishioner



## Prayers Please

Please pray for the repose of the soul and the consolation of the family of **Bob de Roode** (the son of friends of Krissie and her husband), who died in an accident on Thursday.

Maddy Sharman has asked for our prayers.

Vera Bird has asked for our prayers for her Great, Great Grandson Harry

Please pray for Cecilia Fung, the mother of Fr Jojo. She has had a stroke.

Please pray for Timothy Kehoe, who is very ill.

Prayers please for Antonita's nephew Peppin who remains in hospital due to the coronavirus.

Please pray for Caroline Mikhail (daughter – in - law of Jane and Ramsay Mikhail) who suffered a stroke.

Please pray for Peter Halter's sister Jean who has macular degeneration and for Jean's great grandson Rogan who is 8 and has leukemia. Rogan continues to need our prayers.

Please pray for Ted Cotter (brother of Philomena) who has cancer and is undergoing chemotherapy.

Please pray for children under stress.

Please pray for the residents and staff at the two nursing homes in our parish, Abbeycrest and St Luke's.

Please pray for all victims of the Coronavirus.



**Please also remember in your prayers those whose anniversaries occur at this time including;**

Violet Kathleen Taylor, George Jones, Pauline Joyce, Margaret Seymore, Patricia Bateman, Andrew Britton, Eleanor Fanning, Henry Ernest Gibbons, Thomas Hoban, Oscar Roman Lambrano, Christine Lester, Alfred May, Patricia Nicholson, Lillian and Leslie Peach, Jerome Reilly, Lambertus van Bree, Caetano Coutinho, Honey Cooke, Gus Weldon, Mr Timothy F. Pereira.