

So, did you enjoy all the busyness over the Easter period? Or is it more a case that you managed to survive it all? The school holidays were unusual having two weeks of holiday before Easter, and then straight back after the Easter weekend; maybe it was a case, for you, of surviving those two weeks. For the majority, there was the long weekend with two bank holidays to enjoy off work. I hope that amongst all the busyness you found time to enjoy the break and Easter.

As we look forward (there I go again 'looking forward'), there are another two bank holidays coming up in May; which means another two four-day weeks for us to look forward to and enjoy. The wedding season really kicks off in May when many couples will be enjoying their special day; when many of their family and friends will enjoy being together for the ceremony and for the party afterwards. May is also a beautiful time of year and usually a time for proliferation of bluebells, and they have already started to appear as I write. May is also a time of longer days and warmer beautiful weather; a time of year to really enjoy.

Or are we all still so busy living life that all the natural beauty which surrounds us here in the Weald of Kent just passes us by? That would be a real shame. Once in a while, just step off the trend-mill of life and stop, if only for a moment. Look, listen and smell; use your senses and marvel at the beauty of the place in which you live, for we are lucky indeed. Look out for the beautiful sunrise or sunset; listen out for the sounds of the birds; breathe in the clean air. Take a moment out of the busyness of life to enjoy what you have or, before you know it, it will have passed you by.

And, of course, as a Christian, as a priest and as your Rector, I also encourage you to take a moment out of the busyness of life to remember and enjoy the relationship you have with God. Your God and our creator. Don't just let it be in a time of crisis that you remember him and cry out to him. He is there all the time; waiting to pick up that relationship with you when you are ready. Before the Battle of Edgehill (October 1642), one of the Royalist commanders, Sir Jacob Astley, evidently prayed: "O Lord! thou knowest how busy I must be this day: if I forget thee, do not thou forget me." A good prayer and a simple prayer. So, take a moment to step back from all the busyness. Recognise how busy you are, but in that moment of stillness enjoy the gift of life you have.

Revd David Commander, Rector