

# March 2024

## Senior staff message

### Bishop Libby writes...



We began Lent hearing the words of the Ash Wednesday Liturgy:

*Remember that you are dust, and to dust you shall return.*

*Turn away from sin and be faithful to Christ.*

That reminder, as we embarked on the journey through Lent, can sound doom laden but for me, though, the season of Lent is one of hope. The reminder that I cannot be (and should not want or try to be) invincible, that I am limited, flawed, fallen - but that there is remedy in Christ - is a gift of reassurance

For me the season of Lent allows an annual return to the heart of our faith. There is a joy and freedom in letting go of the things we accumulate materially and spiritually that leads to selfishness and self-reliance, in the chance to turn away from misplaced trust in anything but the death and resurrection of Jesus.

My motto this Lent has been to 'keep it simple'. I am trying to live more simply, to take pleasure in simple things and to return to the simple things at the heart of our faith.

I am gently seeking to live out through Lent the aims we have named for our diocese:

to '**deepening relationship with God**', for example, by reading my way through John's Gospel, though Lent Reflections online, through the Bishops' Leadership Team Lent book group;

to '**making new disciples**', for example, by sharing more of my experience of faith with my family and friends, by speaking of Jesus in meetings I attend,

and by inviting people to make a choice to follow Jesus in every service I lead;

to '**servicing our local contexts**' by joining volunteers somewhere across the diocese every week and learning something both of the needs of our County and City and the ways churches are responding;

to '**challenging injustice**' by cutting down on my environmental impact and encouraging biodiversity in my own garden and across our churches, and by being bolder in public to speak of those issues which face the most vulnerable and at risk, such as refugees and asylum seekers, and the homeless.

These simple ways of repentance – that is, of choosing to turn towards those things that are pleasing to God (which usually also means turning away from those things that separate us from God and neighbour) – are life-giving preparation for entering once again into the story of Holy Week and so being ready to receive the extraordinary promise fulfilled at Easter.

I pray you too are discovering the hope of this Lenten season. And that you know the joy of Easter when it comes.

+ Libby Derby

**The Rt Revd Libby Lane**  
**Lord Bishop of Derby**