

# October 2024

## Archdeacon Matthew writes...

In the Franciscan pattern of daily readings which cover all aspects of Franciscan life, today's (19th September) reflection is entitled 'The Third Way of Service: Work'. In the life of the Franciscan order three ways of service to God and humankind are important, work, study and prayer. Work as service to God feels important to reflect on, because let's face it, after we leave school, our work – however that is defined for you – takes us the greatest chunk of our week.

In the manual of the Third Order of the Society of St Francis, the reflection for the 19th day of the month reads:

Jesus took on himself the form of a servant. He came not to be served but to serve. He went about doing good: healing the sick, preaching the Good News to the poor, and binding up the broken hearted.

Our work as Christians might involve a mixture of paid and voluntary roles, it might be focused on church life or lived out in the wider world – more often than not a combination of both. In the life of Jesus we see the example of servanthood – of Jesus taking the 'form of servant. The language of servanthood is challenging in our modern world where we want the innate dignity and worth of all people to be seen and honoured. People might have leadership and management roles that involve steering the work of others, but increasingly in the business world so called 'flat hierarchies' are becoming the norm where all team members are regarded as equal with their tasks being what differentiates one colleague from another.

The Apostle Paul talked about there being one body with many parts (1 Corinthians 12), all unique contributions to the whole. Our work and our service can powerfully contribute to the work of God in the world. There is something especially profound when this is done on a voluntary basis where people who care for something give their time generously.



In June, September and October there are Bishop's Badge service where a total of 142 children and adults receive the Bishop of Derby's badge in recognition of their contribution to the life of our churches and schools. All who receive the Bishop's Badge are hard-working volunteers who engage in service that honours God and helps others. At the three Bishop's Badge services the highlight of the service is two-fold. Firstly, the commendation of each candidate for the Bishop's Badge detailing their particular contribution. Secondly, seeing the joyful emotions of the recipient of the badge as its presented by the Bishop.

Work done in the service of God, our worshipping communities and society is an important outworking of our Christian faith and a way we partner with God in unveiling his Kingdom in Derbyshire and parts of Staffordshire. Wherever you serve and in whatever from that service takes – thank you!

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Matthew Trick".

**The Ven Matthew Trick**  
**Archdeacon of Derby City and South Derbyshire**

Heavenly Father,  
As Jesus came to be served but to serve,  
we ask you to bless all who, following in his  
steps, give themselves to the service of others,  
that with wisdom, patience and courage  
They may minister to the needy, outcast,  
stranger and enemy,  
For the love of him who laid down his life for us,  
Jesus Christ our Lord.  
Amen.