

2<sup>nd</sup> May 2020

Greetings friends. I had an odd moment this morning (not unusual for me you might say), as I was walking Dave. It was quite quiet out but for a few cars and some people walking to work. We turned a corner and a little way down the next stretch was a young man walking towards us. As we grew closer I decided that, for the sake of social distancing, I would cross over to the other side and as we passed we greeted each other from our respective sides of the road. Just then I was struck by the recollection of the story of The Good Samaritan!

Now, I know that there was no one lying injured for me to pass by but I was still a priest crossing to the other side of the road in order to avoid someone else. This avoidance, however, was appreciated and indeed would be seen by many as commendable. Nevertheless, it was a moment of clarity for me.

I was inclined to think about times in my life when I may have crossed the road to avoid someone for reasons not so noble! Actually, I'm more inclined to cross over and accost someone and it's more likely that they'd want to avoid me! But the point is made. Would I cross the road in future, just to avoid someone? Has the last few weeks of social distancing changed me? Will I value the contact I have with others, even if they are people I find difficult, annoying or just too challenging to deal with?

Well, as yet I don't know, I guess the proof of the pudding... as it were.

I will have to wait until we can, once again, enjoy the freedom of going where we like, when we like. Only then, when I chance upon someone in the street, will I know if I am changed, if the lockdown has taught me a new life lesson.

See you on the street!

Tom

And finally.. today a poem sent to me by Frances Milham (attached)

Sent by Canon Tom Page  
Vicar: Ascension with All Saints  
Chelmsford  
(AwAS)