

A Message From The Interim Bishop, The Most Rev Mark Strange

My dear friends in Glasgow and Galloway,

I thought I ought to write to you all again, to update you and to share my thoughts and prayers with you.

I have been able through modern digital means, to attend staff group meetings and to join some of you for worship, that is enabling me, from the hills of Cromarty, to keep connected with you and with your diocese. I will keep trying to catch up with as many of you as possible, please bear with me.

However, the moment when I hand over the responsibility for your wonderful diocese is growing closer and I know that +Kevin is itching to get going. So, if I disappear from your sight for a short time, I will catch up with you when we gather to welcome your new bishop in the Cathedral, whenever that day comes.

I have spent time in the past few weeks in conversation with members of our Scottish Government and with Civil Servants, with those who are looking at new ways of communicating and with the Chaplains in some of our hospitals. Can I ask you to keep praying for our chaplains, they are doing wonderful work. In the Louisa Jordan hospital, Canon Iain Macritchie is the lead chaplain, look after him he is one of my Cathedral Chaplains in Inverness. He has written us a letter of thanks for the way that we have remained resolute in our decisions to keep our churches closed and therefore helping to stop the spread of this virus.

I know that some of you are itching to get back to our church buildings and I know it is difficult but as +Kevin said last week, we closed our churches out of love not out of fear. The love we have for our communities means we need to set an example of isolation to keep them safe. As soon as we are able then things will begin to change, but not until then please.

I want to thank the office staff who have continued from their own homes, to provide the wonderful service we receive, responding to questions, sending out communications and keeping calm. I also want to thank all the clergy and lay ministers who have faithfully adapted their ministry to allow us to worship, pray and keep together, this isn't easy, but you are doing so well.

Amongst the notices I have received I want to inform you of the death of Canon Robin Underhill one-time Priest in Charge at Stranraer and Portpatrick and Scottish Secretary for the Mission to Seafarers. May he rest in Peace and rise in Glory.

Finally, I realise that my time with you is almost over and I want to thank you all for your care for

me and Jane in our travels around the diocese, you have been wonderful. I have one more sermon to preach and that is to be broadcast in the worship at St Mary's Cathedral on Ascension Day, my prayers go with you all.

Blessings

With all best wishes,

+Mark