



# Good News

## September 2020

No matter how many years it is since we finished our schooling there is still a pattern to the year which means that September brings with it a sense of new beginning. Of course, for many of you reading this there will have been the very necessary approach to September that leads to the sorting and preparing for the new school year- whether that be for the first time, the thirteenth time, or the 'who knows how many' time!

This September there is of course even more to consider 'new' as we all look to what the 'new normal' might be for us, whether we are packing our new pencil case or not!

I am extremely pleased to be joining you all in Pagham at this time, in a new phase of my ministry in the Diocese of Chichester. Together we will continue the work of the church community to see how best we can serve the whole of Pagham- and I look forward to meeting you all as I journey around the parish.

But as with any time of change and adjustment we might be aware of feelings of uncertainty or being overwhelmed by all that is being asked of us, and maybe even a longing for the old familiar- and to be honest that's quite reasonable given the rollercoaster we've ridden so far this year!

In her podcast, Michelle Obama with Michele Norris reflects on the turbulent first half of 2020, and turns around the idea of the 'new normal' by suggesting we strive for 'better' not just normal. We might remember that Christ didn't come to make us normal in fact he came and overthrew all the ideals that were seen as normal at that time in order to highlight the will of God the Father that we serve the needs of all people, and so we are called to do the same.

This is no small task and when we might already be feeling overwrought by the challenges of this pandemic we need to turn to turn to Christ who is our 'normal' who calls us to be better.

I encourage you, this September, in this time of recalibration that we have been gifted, to prayerfully reflect on what it is that will help you to grow in this time. The Ignatian discipline of the Examen might be a helpful tool for you to use. The Examen is commonly used at turning points in the day- at midday and before bed but really it can be used at any time and to reflect over any time period. It is a time where we offer up and invite God in to share in precious time. Here we can share our concerns and seek Christ's direction in the way that we should continue.

- So, find yourself some time and space when you can think freely and be present to the God of all comfort- whether that be quietly in a chair, while walking the dog or out for a run. And offer this time to God.
- Gently reflect on the months leading up to lockdown, the months of lockdown and the weeks that have passed as restrictions have started to lift. There is no need to rush this stage.
- Ask God to show you the light of his presence in these times and to highlight the times when you were not quite so aware of his presence- those times that felt darker.

- From this we pray that some pattern may emerge that will guide us into the better times to come- that will encourage us with the things/ activities/ commitments that are important to pick up and those which can be gently let go. In this prayer we commit ourselves to those things which bring light to us and the community, and we give thanks for all that we have learnt through those things we can now set down.
- We thank God for this time and end with the Lord's Prayer.

What is it that God is asking you and inviting you to return to, and to set down this September?

Mthr Lucy  
Curate-in-Charge  
Pagham and Aldwick

**Prayer for any time of transition**

God of Love,  
You are with us in every transition and change.  
As we enter into this new era with excitement and even some anxiety,  
we recall your deep compassion, presence, and abounding love.  
We thank you for the gifts, talents and skills with which you have blessed us.  
We thank you for the experiences that have brought us to this moment.  
We thank you for the work of others that gives breadth and depth to our own  
work.  
Be with us as we move forward, rejoicing with you and supporting one another.  
We ask this in your Holy Name.  
Amen.

*Joseph P. Shadle*

*For more information on praying the Examen do explore  
<https://www.ignatianspirituality.com/ignatian-prayer/the-examen/how-can-i-pray/>  
You might find this book (also available as an app) a useful resource "Reimagining the Ignatian Examen" Mark E. Thibodeaux.*

*The Michelle Obama Podcast can be found on all podcast platforms.*

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**The streets we will pray for this month are:**

Sea Way, Sefter Road, Shirley Close, Silverdale Close, Singleton Close,  
Spinnaker View, Springfield, St Thomas Court, St Thomas Drive,  
Stonehill Crescent, Sudbury Close, Summer Lane and Sussex Drive

**We remember those who have died:**

Gillian Woodruff, Jean Buttery. Edna Swinnerton-Beet, Brenda Dobson,  
Spencer Tomsett

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**Facebook** - Thomas Becket