

A Reflection by Malcolm Knapp...

There is no doubt Covid has changed the world. Bringing a group together from all over the county was no mean feat as risk and rules changed so quickly. The purpose of the weekend's reflection was for us to consider what Leading from the Second Chair meant for us. This seemed plain enough until the word 'subordinate' was introduced. You could feel the room tense as we grappled with what this meant for an ALM or LLM. Sadly Jackie could not be with us so Sally was doing a robust job to tackle this thorny subject.

I am amongst those who believe Covid is having a deeper, more subtle, impact on our lives than we can perceive. Many of us have built defences in more ways than a box of masks and a bottle of sanitiser.

Saturday was a gentler day as we reflected on who we are in relation to a fast changing Diocese; what is our role, what shape will our churchmanship take and how can we become collaborative, working as a team in such diverse and challenging times. Sunday drew us together as we accepted we cannot return to our parishes with any ideas of keeping our heads down until this all blows over.

We were guided, encouraged, sympathetically lead and determined to serve our God with just as much passion. Our leadership style should reflect hope and a sincere determination to serve God. This means we have to pray, listen, act and live in hope: God gives and God takes away. None of us have a God given right to determine how He wants us to proceed. We must work together, share what we have, give generously and live faithfully.....now where have I read that?

Thank you all you who made this very special time possible. Launde is a very special place, Marion was inspired to write a very moving poem, John amused us all with his pictures, not quite David Attenborough yet.

My 'takeaway' as a newcomer to the Diocese was this. We, the laity, are the Diocese. It is the way of Anglicanism, we must communicate this clearly and without any fear to everyone. No one should live in fear of their lead chair; that is not the way of God. This will strengthen our churchmanship, focus our Christian living and giving, and strengthen us in ministry. We all have God given skills and roles in which we can exercise them, we are 'subordinate' (in the true

meaning on the word) to God, to each other and to His kingdom. Our life with God is personal and corporate, we are in fellowship and communion

In this season of Advent I say Maranatha, Emmanuel, help me look, listen and learn. Make me joyful. As our Diocesan office becomes a Parish Resource Centre teach us to communicate, collaborate and make clear the path that leads to your kingdom, here on earth. **Amen.**