

IN CONVERSATION WITH THE CHAPLAINCY

A reflection on faith festivals



POST EASTER REFLECTION

Revd Barbara Hume.

This month we have sadly seen the death of The Duke of Edinburgh. His life as a royal was one of service and duty and in days after his death, we have heard of the many amazing things he has done in that service to the Queen and to this country.

In the days following Jesus' death and resurrection, we as Christians have been learning what it means to follow him. Jesus is showing us what it means to live a life of service to God and to others. During Holy Week we see Jesus washing the feet of the disciples as an act of service, then when he appears to the disciples after the crucifixion, he is preparing them to be servants to the Gospel. They are to preach and teach, to forgive sins, to spread the Good News of the resurrection to the whole world. And it is not to be a service or duty carried out with glum and anxious faces, rather it is one that is to be done with confidence, love and joy as depicted by the post resurrection stories.

As Chaplains we have a vocation to serve and support those who have been entrusted to us, namely the staff who work at Canary Wharf and we do so with the confidence, joy and love that comes from our own faith experiences.

RAMADAN REFLECTION

Shaykh Ibrahim Mogra

During this pandemic, we have all had to make changes and adjustments to almost every facet of our lives; social, physical, financial and spiritual. There are things we will do when it is over, that will become our 'new normal'. It is often said "Change is good." The Qur'an points out that God changes and alters the days between people, meaning no two days are the same; we will have happy/sad, healthy/poorly, comfort/struggle.

We have to adjust ourselves and try to cope with our lot. Many of these changing experiences help to transform us, making us more resilient. Sometimes it requires a life changing event to make that happen. Sometimes it takes frequent and regular events to make that happen. Like the changing seasons and how we adapt to cope with them and enjoy them. For Muslims, Ramadān is one such time to positively transform everything about us. It is like spring which comes once a year to rejuvenate and bring fresh life around us. It is a time to reconnect and make a new start in our relationships especially with God. Like that annual MOT and service that keeps our vehicles road worthy, we too must undergo the tests of life and of the fasting month.

EDITORIAL

The above photo shows the Canary Wharf estate preparations for welcoming people back to Wharf after some of the Covid restrictions were lifted on 12th April. Enabling people to now meet up outside while still maintaining social distancing. So, I guess we are all praying hard for good weather and sunshine!

In this edition my colleagues offer some reflections on the faith festivals falling in this month and what they mean for them and their faith communities given that we still have restrictions for worship in place.

Meanwhile the chaplains are returning to ensure that we now have a physical presence on the Wharf as well as a virtual one. We look forward to seeing those of you around who have already returned to working on the Wharf.

Revd Dr Fiona Stewart-Darling

CHAT TO A CHAPLAIN – Just to remind you even if we are not always visible in Canary Wharf, we are still happy to catch up over a coffee either in person or virtually! To contact us email us at talktous@canarywharfchaplaincy.co.uk

#safepacetochat
#ethicsvaluesfaith
www.canarywharfchaplaincy.co.uk

FROM PASSOVER to SHAUVOT, Rabbi Dr Moshe Freedman

Jews mark the forty-nine-day period between Passover and Shavuot (the Feast of Weeks) by counting each day with a blessing, as this period represents the historical journey from the redemption from Egyptian slavery to receiving the Torah and Ten Commandments at Mount Sinai. This year, this period happens to coincide with the gradual easing of lockdown – a kind of national redemption from a very different kind of hardship, working towards a further easing of restrictions on the 17th of May.

The idea behind counting each day is not to merely anticipate the festival of Shavuot, which commemorates our consecration as a people, but to use each day as an opportunity for gradual self-development and spiritual growth.

While the COVID-19 pandemic has been experienced by people across the world, every individual has been uniquely impacted. While some have been able to ride the storm, others have been badly affected in many distinctive ways. Yet for each of us, it is at the times of life's greatest challenges that we can experience the greatest growth through by building our own resilience and inner strength. Now that we are slowly regaining our liberties, we may ask ourselves how this experience will affect us post-pandemic and in the longer term. Either way, I suspect that life, and all of us celebrating our greatly anticipated freedom, will never be the same.