

Today in the life of the Church is Mothering Sunday. Historically Mothering Sunday was the day when the staff from the Big Family Estates were allowed a day off to visit their mothers and families.

We as a society could not be further from this old custom. Further away in terms of staff no longer working at the big house and further in terms of people visiting their mothers, the people who have mothered them or their families.

As a country we have been asked to isolate ourselves and those who are to isolate themselves completely are in the 70 plus age band. Many will be mothers and carers and as of this morning Boris Johnson is asking people not to visit mothers or those who have cared for them.

Today is a very different day from yesterday and from last week and from the tradition of Mothering Sunday.

Here at Liverpool Cathedral, in the Diocese of Liverpool and in the church at large we have come together as clergy to pray for this nation, for the world, and for each other as we await the full extent of what is to come.

You too can pray The Cathedral is still open for private prayer and there is the opportunity to light candles. There is more than enough space in the Cathedral for people to keep the recommended distance.

Next week we will launch a web-site called prayforliverpool.org. On that web-site you have the opportunity to post prayers and the clergy will read them each day in their private daily prayers. There will also be a reflection each week for people to use in their prayers, there will be copies of the services that clergy offer on your behalf and there will be resources for children to do at home. Please do use the web-site.

In these strange and frightening times we want you the people of Liverpool and beyond to feel connected to your Cathedral which is a place of encounter built by the people for the people to the Glory of God.

As part of connecting and encountering us we are encouraging people to make their own Liverpool Cross. The floor print of the Cathedral is in the shape of a double cross. One vertical line with two horizontal lines. Please make a cross put it somewhere where it can be seen and pray for yourselves and the people of this country and particularly for the NHS, health and care workers.

This evening the Archbishop of Canterbury is asking people to light a candle and put it in the window and think of or pray for the health and social workers of this country and the world.

We want you to be kind to one another to look out for your neighbour to care as your mother or main carer cared for you. In your caring please don't forget those who have no food. The Cathedral is determined to keep its foodbank working, with all the precautions we need to make, but we need people to be kind and to give food to us so that we can continue to feed the most vulnerable. Please Be kind and drop off food at the Cathedral.

Mothering Sunday is the middle Sunday in Lent. Lent is the time Christian's reflect on the suffering and death of Christ. The death of Christ takes place on Good Friday. What follows Christ's death is Christ's resurrection. So as we journey together through this long Good Friday hold on to the hope that Easter will come, new birth will happen and life, in all its fullness, will begin again
Amen.