

Welcome to our Thoughts for the Week

With so many self-isolating and all of our 'normal' lives changing we hope to regularly update this page with articles, photos, prayers and thoughts that we hope will inform, encourage, sustain and sometimes amuse you.

We welcome feedback, material and ideas on how we can help you.

Stand firm in faith and keep strong, safe and smiling

The Curate writes.....

To B&Q or not to B&Q? That is the question. Whether tis nobler in the mind to suffer the slings and arrows of social distancing or to start up cars and oppose them....

Carolyn and I decided to use the shut down as an opportunity to do some much overdue decorating, and so to B&Q we went.

On the way, we stopped off at Asda to get some milk and other much needed liquid sustenance, only to find the shelves empty of pretty much everything useful. It was a sobering and destabilising experience. The poor staff were coping, but only just. Tempers were holding, but only just. It was not a nice experience.

And so to B&Q Warrington. The big one, because our local store in Northwich had run out of paint dye (strange but true). There were lots of families (who I hope were not supposed to be self-isolating) with the same idea. The queue at the checkout was long and stressful. How do the British keep an orderly queue whilst maintaining a two-metre gap? Difficult but doable.

Purchases paid for, I needed to rearrange the contents of the boot to provide a safe place for the big tin of paint to sit. "No darling, this is man work. Please do not put things randomly in the boot. Look, I have this paint...oops no I don't have this paint" for it gracefully slid out of the boot and exploded on the ground. Morning Haze all over the car park, the car, my shoes, the shopping.

Carolyn went back into the store to seek help while I had to stay and face the humiliation. But a strange and wonderful thing happened. We hear of shoppers fighting over sanitiser and wet wipes, but here, people kept coming up to me and offering a box of tissues, a wodge of wet wipes (from three people), a big carrier bag and an old rag. I am sure some people will have had a

good laugh (I suspect I might have been one of them once), but so many just wanted to help.

The man from B&Q eventually arrived, armed with a roll of paper and some cleaner. Evidently he did not realise how much mess five litres can make. Instead he formed a barrier of shopping trolleys to cordon off the area. Eventually, off he went back to the store to replace my lost paint, free of charge.

This event had been good for my soul. At the Reflection group the other day, we were thinking about kindness, about how we can practice kindness and how we can get to the stage of thinking kind thoughts about people. Today I experienced the kindness of complete strangers who gave me resources that they will find difficult to replace to help me out of a situation that was all of my own making. How kind people can be, but then if we are made in the image of God, why should I be surprised that the kindness breaks through now and again?

Tough times, but an opportunity to be kind. Take it.

Rev Julian Osborne

