

Dear Friends

As I come to the end of my ordinand placement at St John's Steve asked me to write some reflections on my time.

Firstly, I must say a thank you to everyone here in Menston. You have embraced me and my family and made us feel so welcome over the past year, it has been a true joy.

Approaching ordination allows you to reflect a great deal on your Christian journey and begin to envisage what sort of priest you may become or want to be. As this time is also the celebration of the Platinum Jubilee, I thought it worth reflecting of the way the Queen, as the head of the Church of England, can be a role model to me in my ministry and to us as Christians out and about in the world.

When I see Her Majesty performing her civic duty with humility and dignity the phrase that leaps to mind is that of the 'servant leader'. I think most would agree that the Queen is a person who has, time and again, demonstrated an unwavering sense of duty and servanthood to her country. I believe that this is deeply rooted in her faith. As we come to the end of the Easter period, we can look back at the stories of Jesus washing the feet of His disciples on Maundy Thursday. We also remember the sacrifice of the cross. This is leadership rooted in service. This is a leadership that put others first and in Jesus' case He paid the ultimate sacrifice.

This may all seem like a lot to live up to, even an unrealistic hope. However, as Her Majesty has demonstrated, it matters not whether you are a Queen or a pauper we all need to remember that as Christians we are all called to lead and proclaim the gospel of good news to the world. At the same time, we must do it with love, humility, and Kindness.

And so, as I depart Menston and begin my ministry in Skipton please pray for me that I remember to be a servant leader. I hope and pray to be worthy of the trust that you and the Church has put in me and in all humility and gratefulness once again, Thank you for your support and love over the last year.

May God bless us all.

Doug