

Dear All,

Christmas 2020

Did you know that stress is accumulative? You can do tests that show how stressed you are based on all the events going on in your life at any one moment. The interesting thing is that even good events are actually stressful- having a child, getting married.

We are in the middle of a global pandemic. I would contend that everyone is living at 6/10 stress at the moment. We are all living with that all of the time.

Everyone is at a 6/10 stress level. As we walk around and relate to each other. The person in the shop, call centre, neighbour, friend, family member. Everyone 6/10. They may look like they are fine but there is a global pandemic going on and people are overwhelmed that everyone might die or civilisation might collapse, or their family might implode or they could lose their job/house/ pension.....or they might get ill and die

If something happens that is a sort of 2/10 stresser normally we would shrug our shoulders. That is because it is taking us from 0 to 2. But if it takes you from 6 to 8 then we are in serious stress. 8/10. That might explain why we found ourselves raging or swearing at the person who cut us up or furious with people not social distancing or mad with family and what they are doing/not doing over Christmas. And suddenly we are crying or breaking relationship being rude or foolish.

How great would it be if we could be a witness of peace at this time?

This is a serious challenge. Imagine what a gift we would be to others if they knew they could call us and we would listen and laugh and focus on them and encourage them. Not obsess about covid and our health and our favourite conspiracy theories. We would be people who would want to know how they are how they are feeling. And maybe even if we are feeling brave offer to pray. Listen to them and to the Spirit and wonder what we can do that would help. Or build them up.

We are to be light in the world not people who spend their time snuffing out candles. Jesus came to change our world. Surely his people are called to deal with this thing in a different way. It might be that our call is to say- yes it is really stressful and not force anyone to pretend.

Best wishes for 2021. We know God will be with us in it. The reality is we do not know much else but we are blessed. We have each other, in our foolish daftness. We have clean water in our taps and flick a switch and we have electricity.- and whole lot of else beside

Yours Lesley