



## Archdeacon Karen writes ...

June is a month of growth and beauty – in this country certainly, as we often experience warmer (often hot) weather and many plants reach their most beautiful in appearance.

It's hard to ignore the way in which plants 'grow' (whether classified as weed or not in our minds); growth in size, in depth of colour, in flower production and in the setting of fruit. It seems as if at the roadside, through cracks in the pavement, in gutters and gardens transformation continues apace as spring turns to summer.

In the church year we step into a season of growth as well, growing in our following of Jesus through what is known as Ordinary time. That can sound quite dull, even though it begins with Trinity Sunday, reminding us of the mystery and wonder that is God: Father, Son and Holy Spirit but building on that we can grow, moment by moment, day by day, through the 'ordinary' things of life, following Jesus in our workplaces, in our schools, in our homes, together as we worship and when we are alone, letting the Holy Spirit fill us with hope, joy and peace and giving us the power to truly live for God.

It's that daily growing as we follow that continually transforms our lives, helping us to become more like Jesus in every action, every word, every thought and then, slowly but surely, the church itself grows (in number and depth) and our communities are built up, as we, individually and collectively live out our calling to serve and to tell,

demonstrating the love and goodness of God. It's often challenging and can be tough, being transformed, but as God's people, loved deeply and abundantly by Him we can trust the process, especially as we stay close.

Other people often say these things so much more effectively and so I want to leave you with a prayer that anyone can pray and encourage you to use it as you follow:

*Thanks be to Thee,  
my Lord Jesus Christ  
For all the benefits you have given me,  
For all the pains and insults you have  
borne for me.  
O most merciful Redeemer, friend  
and brother,  
May I know You more clearly,  
Love You more dearly,  
Follow You more nearly ... day by day.*

*(attributed to St. Richard of Chichester).*

Let's daily ask for God's transforming love and power to fill us, helping us to grow in Him all the way through 'Ordinary' time – time that is anything but!

**The Ven. Karen Hamblin**  
**Archdeacon of East Derbyshire**