Changing Seasons – An Article by Bishop Martin

This has been a tough year for many of our farmers, with many affected not just by uncertainties over taxation and subsidies, but by the hot and dry spring and summer. I saw cattle standing in parched fields with winter hay and silage being fed to them in August. There has been a mixed harvest for arable crops I gather, while many of our fruit farmers have done well, which is good news for them at least, an important part of the rural economy across Worcestershire. Jesus was very familiar with rural life, and spoke memorably of the harvest,

When Jesus saw the crowds, he had compassion for them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd. Then he said to his disciples, “The harvest is plentiful, but the labourers are few; therefore pray earnestly to the Lord of the harvest to send out labourers into his harvest. Matthew 9.36-38

Have you considered whether God is calling you to be a labourer in his Church? There are lots of opportunities to get involved - why not have a look at this page on our website: Your Christian Calling - Diocese of Worcester

I’ve been Bishop of Dudley for almost six years now, and Acting Bishop of Worcester too since September 2024. It has been a busy and demanding year for me as you can imagine, but I’ve very much enjoyed the opportunity to serve the whole diocese in this way. I couldn’t have done it without my excellent colleagues in the Bishops’ Office, the parish support hub in Worcester, and all of you across the Diocese. I am always so grateful for your regular prayers and messages of support. Thank you!

Bishop Hugh Nelson will join us early in 2026. He is already a good friend and colleague from the House of Bishops, and I am very much looking forward to working alongside him here. Bishop Hugh brings a deep sense of calling to this role and that shone through all his visits and encounters with people when we introduced him to the Diocese in July. I know he is very much looking forward to joining us in the new year. Please keep Hugh and his family in your prayers as they prepare to move here.

Gracious and loving God,

through your Son Jesus Christ, the Good Shepherd,

you have called us into the fellowship of your universal Church:

we thank you for calling your servant Hugh to be Bishop of Worcester;

sustain him by your love, strengthen him in faith,

encourage him in hope and grant him the needful gifts of grace;

that through his ministry among us we may live and grow as Kingdom People

sharing faith, hope and love in Jesus’ name.

Amen