

SPECIAL EDITION PARISH NEWSLETTER 2

The Parish of Our Lady of Lourdes Roman Catholic Church, Hungerford

Highlights

Our Lady of Lourdes church continues to be open, subject to the requirements and Government guidelines for places of worship. Sunday Mass continues at 9am, with Adoration and Mass at 9.30 and 10am respectively on Wednesday. All other activity in the church has currently ceased due to the latest COVID-19 restrictions.

News

You can catch up on the news for the parish in the weekly newsletter sent out by Mary Holdsworth. To register for this, contact Maryholdsworth297@btinternet.com You can also catch up by reading the newsletter for www.stfrancisdesales.org.uk our sister parish at Wash Common, and the Diocesan e-News and website at portsmouthdiocese.org.uk which has a wealth of additional information.

Live streamed Mass

Fr. Zbigniew continues to live stream Sunday Mass at 11am from St Francis de Sales, Wash Common. Connect via the website.



Back by popular demand !

Thank you very much, all of you who have sent in very favourable comments about the first “Special Edition” newsletter. The marvellous thing is the first edition seems to have inspired you to come up with new articles, items and materials. So what do we have this time ?

The above image, the view from the ambo (lectern) at Our Lady of Lourdes, is a view that many of you will not have seen, but it’s there to remind me to say something about the Year of the Word and this is also the Year of St. Joseph !

We also have some words from both our current Parish Priest, Fr. Zbigniew, and our former PP Canon Peter. Robin explains the work of Noreen’s Kids, Clare about the Music Ministry at Our Lady of Lourdes, while Margaret passes on an update about our Parish Finances. Bro. Terry explains about a very practical aspect of his personal ‘Lockdown’ , Liz Willmott gives us a taste of the work of a Parish safeguarding representative and Anthony Fitzgerald reminds us of CAFOD

Thank you all for the contributions. Keep them coming and there might even be a 3rd Edition as we slowly climb out of our national Covid-19 lockdown. Don’t forget to keep “Live Streaming” or visit for Mass but **stay safe and well !**



The Apostolate of the Phone !

Since the beginning of the Pandemic I have been carrying out what I call an "Apostolate of the phone." I contact at intervals friends and acquaintances to just have a chat and to share experiences.

I'm sure we all do this to some extent but judging by the response when I contact someone out of the blue I know that it is appreciated.

As a church community, comprised of people of all ages, I think it is important to be aware of those who in our midst might feel isolated and forgotten. This is not just going to be the old but there are younger parishioners some from ethnic groups other than our own.

Forgive me if I sound I am preaching in this matter. It's certainly not intended !

Brother Terry

(It's a very good suggestion to keep in mind our friends and acquaintances, who might appreciate a friendly chat ? Ed.)

Church Maintenance and Parish Finances

The regular maintenance of the church has continued despite this year of lockdowns and tiered restrictions to our lives. Since the new Church was handed over to the parish together with a very large set of keys on 9th April 2014, members of the Church Management Committee have been responsible for making sure that all the 'systems' in the church are regularly tested and serviced. You will no doubt be pleased to know that currently all the systems are working normally and that fire, security and heating have all received their half yearly and annual services and safety checks through these months of restrictions.

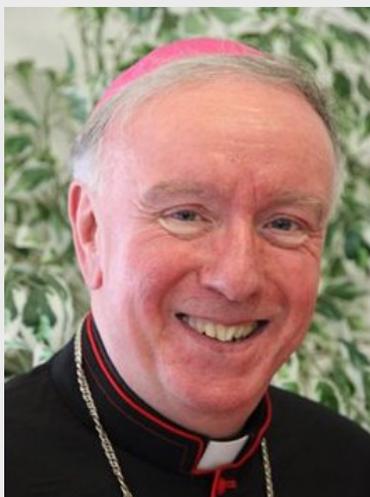
All of this costs money of course, and as the weekly newsletter has been pointing out, the loss of regular or depleted collections during the last nearly 12 months has caused some problems. Our available funds have had to be managed with additional care to accommodate this change in regular income and finance. We have lost the "First Sunday of the Month" collection, the regular Saturday Coffee Morning income and monies from any additional Fund-raising events, all of which have currently stopped. As you all know, the completion of the building of Our Lady of Lourdes in 2014 required us to obtain a Diocesan Loan of £240,000. We have done extremely well in repaying this loan and this debt now stands at only £14,500 !

We were always looking to be debt free by 2021, itself a tremendous achievement as the loan was originally made with the repayment term of 10 years to 2024. It seems that the repayment may take a little longer than the 7 years we had hoped to complete but we are nearly there !

Nevertheless, the Parish Finance Committee has always been greatly impressed by the huge generosity of Parishioners at Our Lady of Lourdes. It was that generosity that raised the initial funding to start the build process for the new church, giving the Diocese the confidence to support the project. Please see the Weekly Newsletter for information on setting up new standing orders and Direct Debits for the Parish

Margaret Ainge - Parish Finance and Church Management Committees

Bishop Philips Four Priorities



1. To Go Out On Mission to Everyone
2. To be Totally Dependent on the Holy Spirit
3. To Convert Catholics
4. To Become Outward Looking Servants

That we enable many more to hear the Gospel and to come to know, serve and love Jesus in the saving communion of His Catholic Church.

To trust more completely in God through prayer imploring the Holy Spirit to inspire laity and clergy to develop and realise new and innovative ministries.

To assist all Catholics to reach a deeper relationship with Jesus in the Holy Eucharist.

That our parish and school communities become ever more outward facing especially to the poor, the homeless and those in need

Noreen's Kids and Our Lady of Lourdes

Anna and I have been involved with working with Romanian children since 1993 when we visited a hospice for children with AIDS built by a charity called Children in Distress (CID) in the town of Cernavoda not far from Constanza on the Black Sea coast. It was a life changing experience for us as we saw some of the 10,000 children who were infected with the HIV virus in the last few years of Nicolai Ceausescu's regime in Romania. These children had been given small blood transfusions, as it turned out with infected blood, as part of a mistaken attempt to treat children who were actually suffering the effects of neglect.

The blood donors were often "working girls" unaware that they had contracted HIV, and often Hepatitis, probably from sailors in the port of Constanza. Many of the children we saw had been infected by both diseases.

At the time of our first visit there as little effective treatment for the virus but the children made enormous progress on simple treatments for the symptoms of their illness. Above all this was because they were being given the love and care which should be every child's birthright. Sadly, in those early days, many children died but it was their courage and matter of fact acceptance of their lot which so moved us. Thankfully the modern treatment for HIV is now pretty effective.

At first nearly all the care staff came from the UK and Ireland, all unpaid volunteers from a variety of backgrounds. Noreen O'Gorman, originally from Ireland and a practise nurse for 20 years in Ealing, volunteered in 1998. She was so moved by what she saw that she ended up retiring early and returned to Romania where she has been ever since.

Eventually Noreen took over one of the CID projects in Slobozia. At first she did everything from fundraising to training Romanian carers, all the time dedicating her life to the care of these children. Most of the funding donors came from the UK and Ireland so in 2007/2008 Anna and I decided we could help by getting a UK charity up and running and registered with the Charities Commission. I retired from the Hungerford GP practise soon after and we have since been raising money and supporting Noreen's wonderful work with the children of Romania.

Our Lady of Lourdes, and indeed all the Hungerford churches have been amazing in the support and encouragement they have given. We raise most of our funds through regular contributors and one-off fund raising events, but the past year has been especially challenging, as it has for all charities, as events have not been possible during the pandemic.

Despite this we are just about managing to keep our heads above water. Hungerford Churches Together are running two

virtual Lent Lunches this year and the one on **12th March at 12.30pm is in support of Noreen's Kids**. Go to: [\(https://www.youtube.com/c/StLawrences/\)](https://www.youtube.com/c/StLawrences/)
Please remember us in your prayers, and heartfelt thanks to all our wonderful supporters.

Robin Dunn - Parishioner

Literally laying the foundations of the church!

The outline of the new church of Our Lady of Lourdes is defined in the foundation work, underway in May 2013. The houses of Lourdes Crescent are more advanced as two separate building contractors were busily working on the same site.



Tales from retirement!

As many of you already know after departing Wantage, and the parishes at Faringdon, Hungerford and Lambourn I spent nearly four months at the Dominican Sisters Nursing Home at Hook (near Basingstoke). This was because the bungalow that the Diocese had bought for me in Didcot was in need of some repairs and these were to be done prior to my arrival. The Sisters have a top floor in the main building which is converted into four flats for the use of retired priests who need some care, rather than trying to struggle on their own. One of the flats was free so that's where retirement started. The priests already there I knew quite well from our diocesan days, and we met for lunch each day in the refectory with the other residents, and then (it

was a Monsignor who arranged this !) we met quietly in the early evening for pre-supper drinks. He paid the bill.

Although I thought I had broken all ties with my previous parish, I was asked to trot out to Faringdon each Sunday for the 9am Mass because the newly appointed priest had been delayed arriving from Nigeria. There was apparently a queue, a few hundred persons long, waiting for visas in Lagos, so we all had to wait. The awful winter weather early on Sunday mornings reminded me of hoofing it over the Downs on Sunday mornings en route to Our Lady of Lourdes at Hungerford. This travel saga from Hook to Faringdon continued until after Christmas 2019. But there was more!

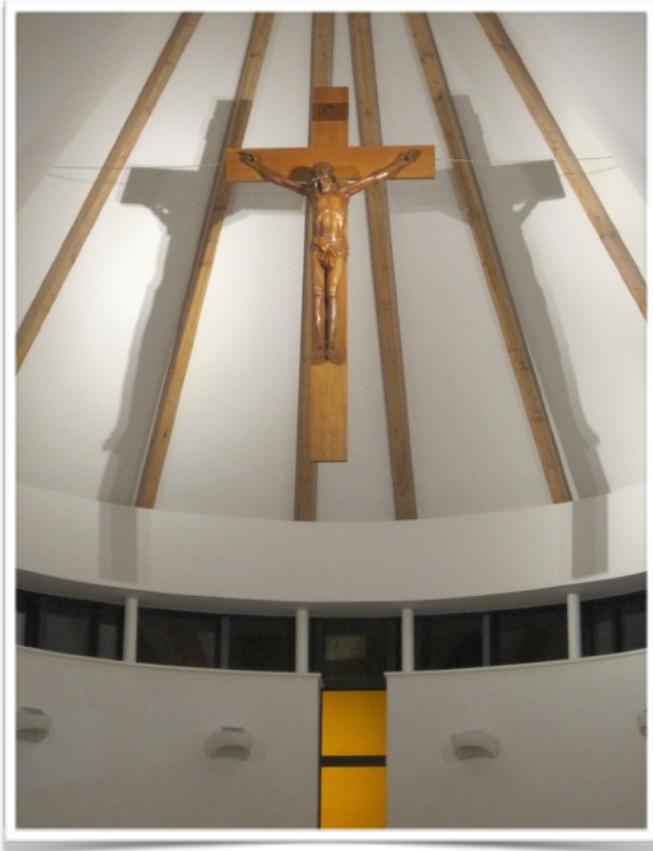
More excitement awaited my arrival in Didcot. The central heating and hot water system in the bungalow both packed up and finding the right engineer at New Year was quite impossible. So I felt very sorry for myself and borrowed little electric fan heaters to survive the cold spell.

I discovered later that these little fellows just eat juice - and I had to pay - boo hoo ! It took ages to get the problem fixed - in fact the repairs are just temporary and I await the proper job being done after the virus has made life more manageable.

Having supplied out in all the neighbouring parishes for three months (to give the priests a holiday break) we all then hit lockdown in the Spring of 2020 as you know, and since then I have helped the local priest supplying at Didcot and Wallingford when he has been in need of help.

The moral of the story is that you never know what is around the corner so do not plan too much. The Good Lord, they say, has a sense of humour. I agree !

Canon Peter Turbitt - Former Parish Priest for Wantage, Faringdon, Lambourn and Hungerford



The “Calvary” in the Church

The hanging crucifix in the Sanctuary at Our Lady of Lourdes was donated by the Jesuit Community at Loyola Hall, Rainhill, St. Helens in 2013. The crucifix was discovered “behind a cupboard” and was exactly the size, design and weight that we were looking for to be hung in the church.

When it was eventually placed in the Sanctuary and illuminated an unexpected, unplanned and unanticipated feature was created. There on the ceiling of the Sanctuary was a Calvary of three crosses; Christ joined by two others crucified.

Prayers are answered in unexpected ways.

Inspiring Homilies

One of the benefits of live-streaming Mass is that you get to “meet” so many different priests and see so many different churches.

Some church sanctuaries are frankly cluttered with furniture, while others are open and have a serene appearance. Walls are often garish patterned marble, historic stone or woodwork, plain painted or hung with murals and banners.

They are able to detract or focus and I remember having these discussions regarding our own Sanctuary when the church was being planned with the architect in 2006-2014.

Similarly the homilies have been wonderful and you realise how very fortunate we have been with Fr. Zbigniew’s (humorous and questioning) and Canon Peter’s (insightful and informative) homilies.

I marvel at how so many of our Catholic clergy can deliver the most amazing homilies day after day and often to a completely empty church (but large virtual audience).

We are indeed blessed.

So why not drop those priests a little note of support, thanks and encouragement....and say a prayer for them ?

The Music Ministry at Mass

I want to share with you the process of choosing music each week.

I believe there is a very fine balance between finding music distracting and preventing the focus on prayer or, what I believe its purpose is, if done sympathetically, draw us into the beauty of the Liturgy. Music during Mass should support the Liturgy and has to be appropriate and accessible. The Church prescribes very strict guidelines on Music and the Liturgy, it states that when the faithful gather to worship, “their communal action, which is called liturgy, is composed of certain symbolic gestures (rites and sacraments) within which music and singing occupy a privileged place”. So, with that in mind, I set aside an evening each week to read through the Liturgy and familiarise myself with the weeks ‘theme’.

At OLOL our congregation typically employs the ‘4 hymn sandwich’ which is:

Processional - This always reflects the Gospel reading and is typically a hymn of praise.

Offertory - There are only a few hymns accessible to our congregation (Laudate hymnbook) for the Offertory and some of you may have noticed I play them on a ‘rolling rota’.

Communion - The Church advises that our Communion music choice should reflect the Eucharistic mystery and a thanksgiving hymn is pertinent, but, should the Sunday be a feast day, then we can celebrate at this point.

Recessional - After the final blessing I love to finish with a rousing hymn. Incidentally, I am more than happy to include your hymn choices, so please feel free to make suggestions !

But, were you aware that the only parts of the Mass which should be sung are the Gospel Acclamation, Sanctus, Memorial Acclamation and the great Amen ?

Unfortunately, whilst lockdown has put paid to our congregational singing, the above should still be sung and I now put out an appeal for a ‘Cantor’. If anyone would like to step up to the lectern as a Cantor or to join me in playing the organ (to cover my weekend working days), please contact me via email at clare.webber@gmail.com Full training will be given.

So remember, when we finally raise the roof, there has been some thought behind the hymn choice and we aren’t singing them just because ‘I like them’.

Clare Webber - Organist

Four things to try and do in the Year of the Word 2020 - 2021.....

1. Let’s try to get to know the Bible better and to understand its messages.
2. Let’s read the Bible allowing the Word of God to touch our hearts, change our thinking, direct our wills and transform our actions
3. Let’s really get to know one of the Gospels well
4. Let’s prepare well for Sunday Mass by reading and reflecting in advance on the Scriptures



.....and the Year of St. Joseph 2021

The month of March is traditionally when the Church makes a special devotion to St. Joseph, but this year is the 150th Anniversary of St. Joseph's proclamation as "Patron of the Universal Church" by Pope Pius IX on the 8th December 1870.

To mark the occasion Pope Francis has dedicated this year as The Year of St. Joseph. His Feast Day is of course the 19th March (I remember this as it's the day I was married and I dare not forget !). Leading up to the Feast Day and starting of course on 10th March is a Novena to St. Joseph. For more information check out praymorenovenas.com

The Litany to St. Joseph

Lord, have mercy on us.	<i>Lord have mercy on us.</i>
Christ, have mercy on us.	<i>Christ, have mercy on us.</i>
Lord, have mercy on us.	<i>Lord have mercy on us.</i>
Christ, hear us.	<i>Christ, graciously bear us.</i>
God the Father of Heaven	<i>Have mercy on us.</i>
God the Son, Redeemer of the world,	<i>Have mercy on us.</i>
God the Holy Spirit	<i>Have mercy on us.</i>
Holy Trinity, one God,	<i>Have mercy on us.</i>
Holy Mary,	<i>Pray for us</i>
Saint Joseph,	
Illustrious son of David,	
Light of the patriarchs,	
Spouse of the Mother of God,	
Chaste guardian of the Virgin,	
Foster-father of the Son of God,	
Watchful defender of Christ,	
Head of the Holy Family,	
Joseph most just,	
Joseph most chaste,	
Joseph most prudent,	
Joseph most valiant,	
Joseph most obedient,	
Joseph most faithful,	
Mirror of patience,	
Lover of poverty,	
Model of workmen,	
Glory of domestic life,	
Guardian of virgins,	
Pillar of families,	
Solace of the afflicted,	
Hope of the sick,	
Patron of the dying,	
Terror of demons,	<i>Pray for us...</i>
Protector of Holy Church,	<i>Pray for us</i>
Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world,	<i>Spare us, O Lord.</i>
Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world,	<i>Graciously bear us, O Lord.</i>
Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world,	
<i>Have mercy on us.</i>	
God made him the lord of His household,	<i>And prince over all His possessions.</i>

A Prayer in the Pandemic

Please dear Lord, free us from this pandemic.

Keep us safe.

Cure those who are sick

Receive those who have died into your heavenly kingdom

Bring peace and comfort to those who mourn, the lonely and those who cannot see their families.

Support those who are working in the health services; those who tend to the sick and the dying; those who care for our elderly and disadvantaged and those who labour to keep us supplied with essential services

Amen

Continuing the Litany to St. Joseph.....**Let us Pray**

O God, who in your inexpressible providence were pleased to choose Saint Joseph as spouse of the most holy Mother of your Son, grant, we pray, that we who revere him as our protector on earth, may be worthy of his heavenly intercession. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God, for ever and ever. Amen.

Know Your Parish Priest !**On 1st Sunday of Advent 2020 Fr. Zbigniew explained during Mass how he became a priest. This is what he said (with a small addition !)**

I was born in Poland near Krakow into a traditional Catholic family, one of four brothers, who all became altar servers after receiving their First Holy Communion.

We went to church several times each week and of course as altar boys we spent a lot of time in church. Each year I went on trips into the mountains and developed a strong relationship with the church.

When I was about 9 years old I thought about the priesthood. I thought that it would be good to become a priest because I would have many opportunities to pray for my parents that we could meet in Heaven.

In those days there was a lot of talk about sin, hell and the punishment for sins. This is how I was taught by the priests and my parents. My first feelings about God were therefore feelings of fear, fear of His punishment, not love for Him, which is very sad. But I met many wonderful priests who have devoted themselves entirely to others. They are incredible, serving God and the people around them, and I just wanted to be like them.

I went to the seminary and eventually, on 16th May 1989, was ordained a priest and served the Church in Poland for 22 years. I arrived in England in November 2011, and at first served for 7 years as a Chaplain within the Polish Catholic Mission of England and Wales. Since January 2019 I have been a priest in the Diocese of Portsmouth, firstly in Guernsey and then from September 2019 in Wash Common and Our Lady of Lourdes - and I am so happy !

Now I experience God in a very different way, through my love and gratitude. Gratitude to Him for everything He does, for who He is to me, for guiding me and being my friend. I admire and praise God for knowing everything about me and never ceasing to love me - its amazing. Perhaps I am finally maturing in my love and friendship with God.

Fr. Zbigniew Budyn

Fr. was a member of the Society of Christ (SChr), a clerical religious congregation established in 1932 by Cardinal August Hlond and the Society's first Superior General, Ignacy Posadzy. There are over 390 member priests around the world, serving Polish communities but also, as instructed by Cardinal Hlond, teaching the public about the Holy Mass and increasing a knowledge and awareness of the liturgy.

The Society of Christ noviciate is in Mórkowo where novices spend a year in prayer and discernment before taking their first vows. After this they are considered members of the Society and are accepted into the seminary in Poznań. Students become deacons after 5 years and are ordained at the end of year 6.

The Order is divided into provinces, and Fr. Zbigniew was within the Province of the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus (Europe, UK and Ireland) until he officially became a Portsmouth Diocesan priest and left the Society.

The Parish Safeguarding Ministry

I have been the Parish Safeguarding Representative for more than 10 years. Many of you are already familiar with my role in organising the applications for the then CRB (Criminal Records Bureau) checking, now known as the DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service) checking, as required for some roles in parish ministry. I also organise the on-going and refresher training, now on-line, for all those parishioners who require it.

The enforced Covid-19 restrictions over the past 12 or so months, have given rise to some changes in the overall process. From now on all applications, including cases requiring a DBS re-check, will be done partly online. The individual minister will be issued with a certificate and once registered online, negates the need for a full re-check every three years thereafter.

From time to time I am also alerted about individuals who could pose a threat to vulnerable adults or children and indeed to all of us in the Parish Community. I am then privy to information which has been shared between dioceses and other parish safeguarding ministers and will then liaise with and take advice from, the Portsmouth Diocese Safeguarding Office. Depending upon the content of this advice, I may share this with one or two other ministers in the parish as required, in order to safeguard parishioners.

During the past 10 years or so, all of us have had to become more aware of how children and young adults are so vulnerable to online abuse. Various web and gaming sites have been flagged up as being particularly risky in this regard. The NSPCC produce an annual report called “How safe are our children?” and last year saw the launch of their “Wild West Web” campaign which seeks to highlight the risks to child safety from going on line and from the lack of regulation of social networks.

Last year, the independent charity Victim Support was awarded the contract to manage “Safe Spaces“, which is a joint project between the Catholic Church of England and Wales and the Church of England. This is to provide vital support for survivors of church related abuse. It is a national service providing remote support for as long as the survivor needs it. If face to face support is also required, contact and referrals will be made with appropriate local organisations depending on need.

The role of Safeguarding Minister has remained much the same except that, in view of the above, we all have to be so much more aware of the scenarios which pose a threat to Vulnerable Adults and children.

Elizabeth Willmott Parish Safeguarding Representative

The Year of St. Joseph

For an explanation of the Year of St. Joseph and some background information on St. Joseph go to:

<https://youtu.be/5kioQogDrvA>

Our Lady of Fatima

Following on from the last Newsletter with information on Our Lady of Lourdes why not be uplifted by hearing more about the other great Marian centres?

Go to the link below to hear about Our Lady of Fatima:

<https://youtu.be/GUyyrWVOCps>

Our Lady of Lourdes is a wonderful contributor to CAFOD and Lent is the right time to tell you all about it

CAFOD is part of one of the largest aid networks in the world and is the official aid agency for the Catholic Church in England and Wales. With our global reach and local presence, we have the potential to reach everyone. With your help, we reach out to people living in hard-to-reach places, in war zones and those who are discriminated against. We believe that if one of us is hurt, hungry or abandoned, we all are hurt, hungry and abandoned.

Our local experts help some of the most difficult-to-reach people in Africa, Asia, Latin America and the Middle East. Whether it's a single mother living in a remote area, a teenage boy living in a war zone, or a disabled father and daughter who are discriminated against, we help anyone regardless of faith, gender and ethnicity.

Through a local priest, a midwife or a water engineer – our global reach is present in the lived experience of local communities. These skilled women and men understand what people need because they are part of the communities they work in. Their commitment, passion and knowledge reach people other organisations can't.

We have the potential to reach so many people because we are a member of a global Church network with a presence in 165 countries. The local Church is trusted even in the most dangerous countries, regions and communities regardless of religion. This means that your support will help those who are truly in need.

No one wants to live on handouts. That's why our experts provide long-term aid to equip people with the skills, tools and opportunities to live with dignity, support their families and give back to their communities. Together with your support, and the expertise of our local aid workers, we reach out to those that are excluded and give them the help they need.

We speak out for justice when international bodies and governments make decisions that damage poor communities. It can take years of effort or be as simple as signing a petition. Increased aid for water and sanitation, action on climate change, protection for human rights defenders, and a clamp down on corruption have all come as a result of acting together.

To make a donation to CAFOD go to the website www.cafod.org.uk and click on 'Donate to the Lent Appeal 2021' by clicking the green button halfway down the page

Thank you.

Anthony Fitzgerald - Parish CAFOD Representative

If you would like to contribute an article, information, an anecdote, a prayer or a comment please send it to:

chriscarlon@btinternet.com

and we will do our best to include it in the next Special Edition

Stay safe and well