

Limited bandwidth!

Not a warning message I was used to before Lockdown.

Perhaps you relate to this experience. You're on a Zoom call with colleagues, friends or family, and suddenly this warning sign flashes up – Limited bandwidth - The screen has frozen - you find yourself speaking to an audience of zero - your valuable contribution to the meeting is being lost into fresh air. Forever.

And humbling as ever, when you join back into the meeting, the conversation has moved. The world has kept turning without you.

We are limited. Limited human beings.

This is not our favourite mode of operating. Like the BT advert for unlimited broadband, or the new that phone contract for unlimited minutes, we like to pretend we are unlimited.

Lockdown brings a home truth. We are not unlimited. Many of us are limited physically – my husband commented on the excitement he felt in getting out – to go to our local Co-op! And more than that we are limited in our energies, and capacity. Maybe you have home schooling challenges. I am thankful my boys have grown out of primary school, but it still feels like I am running a school canteen, and an amateur football club as well as being a bishop. But maybe you would love to have teenagers running round your house as you work. The house is very quiet. You are limited in human contact. Or at the other extreme, maybe you're working on the frontline, giving out in demanding circumstances every day. But again finding....

We have limited energy.

We have limited vision.

We have limited possibilities ahead if you're a holiday addict like me.

Only God is unlimited. His Spirit is not in lockdown.

I found it very moving to read the story of James Matheson in Pete Greig's fantastic book "*Dirty Glory*". He was an intercessor in the

He lived in a tiny Highland village called Clashnagrave in the 19th century. During the Crimean war he would interceded every night, sometimes all night for the local soldiers, the 93rd highlanders, away fighting for their lives on the front line. Sometimes this angelic figure would appear in the trenches bringing comfort and peace. At the end of the war, the soldiers returned and there was a special communion service held. When James Matheson entered the church, the soldiers gasped. He before them stood the man they had seen in those distant trenches, night after night, bringing comfort amid the horrors of war.

What if this time in lockdown became an unexpected opportunity to take home that we are limited. We have less energy. Demands are intense. But with the breath of Spirit of God we can intercede, with His groans, far beyond all human limits. What if lockdown brewed up a new generation of intercessors who walked the battlefields of our NHS, our schools, our families, our government, our estates, our country. Does that quicken your heart? Ask Jesus to teach you more.

Ephesians chapter 3.20:

"Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine... according to His power that is at work in us".

+Jill Lancaster 22.1.21