

Dear Friend

Many Christians have difficulty in reconciling the findings of science with the words of Scripture. This is particularly so with the creation stories and with recent theories of evolution.

Recently clergy and lay ministers in the diocese were sent a report entitled **COVID-19: From the Viewpoint of a Scientist who is also a Priest** along with a covering letter from Bishop Christopher. The report is written by the Revd Professor Mary Seller who was formerly Professor of Developmental Genetics at King's College, London and is Assistant Priest at St John the Evangelist, Hurst Green, Surrey.

Bishop Christopher says: "I asked Mary to write this paper because in conversation with her I found what she had to say very interesting as she has a background in genetic research and theology. Having given her life to genetic research Mary brings fascinating insights into the situation through which we are all living at present."

The report was sent to us in the hope that it might be helpful to us all in thinking about where God might be in this current situation. I read the report and concluded that it was indeed helpful and want to bring it to you as well so that you can benefit from Professor Seller's knowledge and theology.

The report has been uploaded to our website and you can find it at:

<http://stmatthew.org.uk/uploads/Public/COVID-19-scientist-priest.pdf>

You can also find it by going to the home page and scrolling down until you come to the link.

I found it a fascinating read and highly informative so I do commend it to you. On a personal level, I'm keen on plants (though I wouldn't dignify myself with the title of "gardener"). Most of our best garden plants are the result of human intervention into God's creation and, with lots of work, produce wonderful results. If you have, or have seen, plants or trees with variegated leaves (leaves which have cream or pink parts as well as green), this is often the result of introducing a virus to the plant. It also helps to keep the plants smaller (to suit our smaller gardens), but is in fact compromising the plant's immune system for our own pleasure. Sometimes you will see that part of the plant has thrown off the virus and has produced a more vigorous branch with all-green leaves. The plant's true nature will out!

God's creation is indeed wonderful even as we try to bend it to our liking!

Let us pray:

God of creation and Lord of life, you entrusted us to care for our environment, but in many parts of the world we have failed. Help us to realise how fragile and unstable our surroundings are, because we are not looking after creation. We need to be true stewards and to understand how the most insignificant little flowers, and the tiniest insects, each creature and individual people are all part of a wondrous whole. Amen.