

### **Third Sunday Advent 2023**

“Who are you? We must take back an answer”

This figure St John the Baptist did not fit in.

So he frightened people.

He frightened the establishment.

This was not in the order that they worked with.

They had a structure

A set of Laws

Who are you?

As my Father was dying of Cancer in his bed at home

I was with him

For weeks, and then months

On one occasion I asked should I come and join him

Sit there

Said he and shut the something up

So I sat

Eventually we talked

We spoke of many things

We were not in control

He was dying

Yet still I had never been closer to him the whole of my life

Even so in the midst of it all Our Lord Jesus Christ walked with me. Through good and bad. Through anxious and calm. Our Lord Jesus Christ walks with me.

During my service in Burnley I ran band nights

We had a talented musician called Luke who asked for this

And did not let go

I knew nothing about Music amplification systems

We knew nothing about the heavy rock that was played

I had a radical introduction to Mosh Pits

When the youth jumped around with what seemed violent abandon

There were about two hundred youth screaming and shouting

Now those young people are parents

Now they proudly proclaim that they were in a Band

Now those people remember

As I remember with joy

At the time I asked myself

Why are you doing this?

Who are you?

I Organised, staffed, prepared

I was not in control

Even so in the midst of it all Our Lord Jesus Christ walked with me. Through good and bad. Through anxious and calm. Our Lord Jesus Christ walked with me.

This morning I arose from my bed

It was a difficult process

Involving alarm

Snooze button

And radio

Talking to self I bullied and cajoled

There were events for the day in my diary

But who knows were the day will lead

There are sheets of preparation

Such as this

Priesthood over the last 40 years

Has involved so much and so little

I have never really been on control

Have faith you have never really been in control

Death will call you

Illness transform you

Circumstance will challenge you

Who are you?

Some days you will seek an answer

To take back into your heart and feel a false sense of security

I will tell you who you are

You are a pilgrim on a journey

Where one day follows the next

Where one event leads to another

Even so in the midst of it all Our Lord Jesus Christ walks with you. Through good and bad. Through anxious and calm. Our Lord Jesus Christ walks with you.

Have faith

You will never be in control

But hold your head high

Take on the challenge

And keep on walking.