

A pandemic of disarray

'The best laid plans of mice and men often go awry', as Polly Zipperlen finds during lockdown at the Rectory

For those who read my last article, you may remember that some of Marcus' parishioners often find me in a state of semi-disarray, appearing at the Rectory door as I have just washed my hair. Unbelievably, the current Covid pandemic has led to further disarray in the Rectory.

I admit that the start of the pandemic was frightening and from hearing the news and scrolling social media, I (wrongly) assumed certain death for 99% of the population. I have been redeployed into Infection Prevention in the hospital, compounding my fears of personal demise.

But as I became accustomed to this new normality, I mused on the possibilities of home schooling. My earth-mother instincts surfaced: baking, growing vegetables, fun maths games, projects that my children would be falling over themselves to enjoy!



I could finally finish all the curtains for the Rectory (four years after moving in) and actually learn to crochet, instead of tying knots in wool that my friends kindly untie for me at crochet-group. BUT, hang on, this is the first year since the boys were born that I am working full-time! This means that I would have to go to work every day, while Marcus and the boys get to go on extended bike rides and dig the allotment.

Our new routine consists of me trundling off to work somewhere across the vast landscape covered by the local health board, while Marcus and the boys work, exercise and dig for victory. I arrive back home at 7pm for dinner and bed, before repeating the process the following day.

All well and good, apart from the lack of external social contact, not so much from the need to see people (although as an extrovert, social exclusion is truly difficult), rather hosting social gatherings is my main motivation for cleaning!

Much as nature is reclaiming the external world in lockdown, so dust, spiders, shoes and mess have claimed the Rectory. Marcus and the boys are sporting semi-feral haircuts and my hair looks more tobacco-stained than dip-dyed. My wardrobe alternates between nursing-scrubs and a pair of shorts held together with gaffer tape.

No matter, no unexpected visitors to see us, until I forget about my new appearance and find I have gone to the shop! As I say, the Rectory disarray has worsened since I last wrote, and no sign of improvement in the near future!