



St Mark's Church, Reigate

September 2026

Letter from the Vicar, Father Martin Colton

Dear Friends

September – a month of endings and beginnings. As summer draws to a close, and shorts and t-shirts are put away for another year, the usual rhythm of life returns with children heading back to school, youngsters packing up for university or college, and the TV is full of ads for all the new programmes about to begin.

In the church, we look towards all that lies ahead in the next few months – Harvest Festival, All Souls, Remembrance Sunday, Advent and then, of course, the culmination of it all, Christmas! But before we get to Christmas, we enter the season of autumn – a time of thanksgiving. Maybe you want to give thanks to God for a lovely summer holiday, for weddings, for friends and family or for new beginnings.

Throughout this month in our church we give thanks for God's creation which culminates in Harvest on 4 October. Living lives of thankfulness, however, doesn't mean that we should just ignore our sufferings or the suffering of others and say they don't matter, because they do matter. There is a time to laugh and a time to cry.

So many people say they mustn't grumble and imply that their sufferings are too small to be of value compared to other peoples, but that is not true. All of our struggles and sufferings matter to God, however small they are. If we can learn to be positive and thankful during the good times, then that will help to sustain us through the difficult times.

Each new day brings with it a new beginning and a challenge. So how about a challenge – a challenge to be thankful! To make the effort to see the positive in a situation rather than the downside. To stop us when we start moaning and give thanks instead. And I think that if we can do that, we'll discover that whatever life may bring, it will be the better for having consciously tried to live it in an attitude of thankfulness.

With my best wishes