

12. Vaccine

In the face of a rapidly mutating virus, vaccines have brought much longed-for hope. So much to celebrate – the extraordinary achievement of scientists world-wide, the selflessness of trial volunteers, the speedy roll-out in many parts of the world.

Chad, the first Bishop of Lichfield, who died on this day in 672, would undoubtedly be thrilled to see the city's present-day cathedral serving its community as a vaccination centre (above). In his time too, plague was prevalent and he was renowned for his wisdom and gentleness in difficult situations.

He would probably not be so impressed with the response to this historic test for global co-operation. The squabbles and the scale of vaccine inequality would pain him. No wise person can fail to see that until the whole world is protected, none of us truly will be. No gentle person could think it just for the most wealthy nations to be protected before others. Yet, it's estimated that only 10% of those in low-income countries will be vaccinated this year. Many will have to wait until 2024.

That's why Becca Rogers, Vicar of the King's Lynn Group in West Norfolk, has set up a JustGiving page. She's enabling us to adjust this injustice by donating the price of our own (free) vaccine so that someone in a less privileged part of the world can have one too.



Today...

...we thank you, O God, for all that brings hope to a world plagued by sickness and injustice.

Amen