

## The Parish of The Sacred Heart and St Aldhelm

**If you have been away from the Church for a long time...**



# ***welcome back!***

There are lots of reasons why people stop going to church, why people stop practising their faith. It can be simply getting out of the habit. It can be because they have been deeply hurt by someone in the church – a priest for example. It can be because they have found some part of the Church's teaching impossible or unreasonable.

Often church people can make it very difficult to enable us to feel we belong. Sometimes people leave the church and never give it another thought – for others it is not like that.

The church is certainly not perfect, but we believe that belonging to the church helps us to search for what really matters in life. We invite you to continue that search with us.

*In the gospels Jesus always had time for those who felt they were "outsiders".*

*The parables of the lost sheep and the prodigal son remind us of how much Jesus wanted to welcome back those who felt they were lost.*

Catholics believe that Jesus is still waiting to welcome back into his church anyone who feels they are called to belong, even if they have been away a long time.

Some practical steps:

- Come along to mass on a Sunday or weekday
- Talk to people you already know who come to church here
- Ask to speak to the priest or deacon
- Look up our website

If you would like to come back to the practice of your faith, you will be very welcome.

*Belonging is one of the most basic of human needs. We all need to belong somewhere, deep in our heart we know that we belong to God – because He speaks to us in the secret place in our heart.*

*God calls us to belong to His people, and that call can keep nagging at us. St Augustine said: “Our Hearts are restless, O Lord, until they rest in you”. The invitation is to find God who can give your heart rest, by being one with His people.*

*For more information please contact:*

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