

## May magazine

As we enter May I am preparing for the annual confirmation service at Ampleforth which will be on the 11<sup>th</sup>, with our new Bishop of Whitby, Barry Hill presiding.

This year there will be six candidates from Ampleforth College, one of whom will be baptized, and two from the benefice.

This is always a joyous event for the candidates and their families and for our community with tea at the Vicarage afterwards.

Confirmation for the candidates marks the sealing of the covenant (God's promise/ownership) created in baptism. Those being confirmed are each known as 'confirmandi' and collectively as confirmands. The roots of confirmation are found in the Church of the New Testament. In the Gospel of John 14, Christ speaks of the coming of the Holy Spirit on the Apostles (John 14:15-26). Later, after his Resurrection, Jesus breathed upon them and they received the Holy Spirit (John 20:22), a process completed on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2:1-4). Confirmation is a chance for anyone who has already been baptised (perhaps baptised as a child) to commit themselves to Jesus and the mission of the Church - to 'confirm' the promises made at their baptism. These promises publicly recognise God's love for us and acknowledge that we all need to turn away from selfishness and evil and to accept God's offer of a fresh start with Him. As baptism is the beginning of the journey, confirmation compels us to ask, what more does God have in store for us? What kind of life in Christ is God calling us to enter more deeply?

Therefore, every new day is an opportunity for confirmation, when we can ask for God's will for us to be

revealed, to see our journey a little bit more clearly, knowing our Lord goes before us, is with us, and loves us.

The prayer the Bishop says immediately after confirmation is not only a significant point in the service for the candidates and their families but should also be a prayer for us all each day.

*“Defend, O Lord, these your servants with your heavenly grace, that they may continue yours forever, and daily increase in your Holy Spirit more and more until they come to your everlasting Kingdom. Amen.”*

Every peace and blessing.

Rev James.