



Thank you for responding to the invitation and challenge to read the whole of the Gospel according to Saint Matthew at least once through the course of 2020. On a number of occasions early in his pontificate Pope Francis asked the crowds in St. Peter's Square, 'Have you read part of the gospel to-day?' or 'Do you carry a gospel with you to be able to read some verses each day?' The Holy Father commends reading part of the Gospel every day so that we can listen to Jesus at all times.

Throughout 2020 the Bishops of England and Wales invite you to join them in reading St. Matthew's Gospel, just a few verses each day. If you are able to share that reading aloud with your family all the better, perhaps taking turns with the pericopes for the day.

In his Apostolic Exhortation, *Evangelii Gaudium* (The Joy of the Gospel) the Holy Father says the Lord does not disappoint those who take the risk of letting Him encounter them each day; 'no one is excluded from the joy brought by the Lord' (EG.3).

Mary, Virgin and Mother, ... obtain for us a new ardour born of the resurrection, that we may bring to all the Gospel of life which triumphs over death.' (EG.288)

May the words of the gospel bring you and your families renewed faith, hope and joy.