Thank you Peter, thank you to the team here at All Saints – refreshments following our service, Lambourn Lambs, Coffee & Chat & of course Remembrance next week.

I've got an additional notice of a more personal dimension.

As a priest, and previously as a teacher and headteacher I have been blessed and am deeply grateful for the way in which people in so many relationships, in different contexts and situations have shaped my working life for good. I have been blessed with two vocations in my working life.

Throughout my time as a priest both here in the Lambourn Valley Benefice and at St Paul's Wokingham I have received far more than I have ever given. It has been a ministry where God has indeed blessed the people I've had the privilege of serving and leading.

Now comes the hard bit….

In order to reduce speculation or any rumours, or dare I say, gossip I am today announcing my retirement. As today is a Benefice wide Patronal festival it seemed appropriate. My last service will, most likely be Easter Day or Low Sunday next year.

I know this is premature to what many will have expected, the Bishop Of Oxford gifted me orders for three years.. as I was due to retire in 2028 but there is a prayerful reason behind my difficult decision.

In the light of his recent medical scare and with prayerful discernment, Keith and I have made this decision in order to spend more time together, most likely visiting France, living life to the full, while offering my services as a priest, in due course, at St Paul's Wokingham.

Finally, please forgive me for not sharing this individually but I felt it was better to let everyone know at the same time. obviously this news went previously to both Bishop Mary and Sub Dean Peter as patrons of the Benefice …..

In terms of our looking, ahead, as I approach the 'threshold' of retirement I think you are well enough acquainted with me to know, that, by God's grace I will continue to serve you all, being thankful, indeed blessed in my vocation, that I will continue to be prayerful, lead worship and be as comfortable in our communities as in our Churches. And, in the remaining months a promise that I will continue to constantly call your good selves, the body of Christ, God's people to live as disciples in the world and serve Him in all that we do together.

With every blessing and many, many prayers, Julie