



## FROM THE CHAPLAIN

**Over the last couple of weeks, I have been groaning** . I groan at what is happening in the Middle East - will the hatred ever cease? I have groaned over the murder of a young woman. I have also groaned over my aging body that lets me down.

Groaning is the emotion that says, 'this should not be; we are meant for better things.' The Bible teaches us that groaning is normal for the believer.

*"18 I consider that our present sufferings are not worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed in us.*

*22 We know that the whole creation has been groaning as in the pains of childbirth right up to the present time.*

*23 Not only so, but we ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for our adoption to sonship, the redemption of our bodies.*

Romans 8

Nature groans under the weight of pollution and disaster - it was made to be pure, beautiful, and balanced (v.22).

People groan under the weight of death and dysfunctional relationships - we are made for eternity and love, not death and evil (23).

But Christians also believe that a time coming when Jesus will return, give justice to all, and renew both people and planet. This renewal will be super! Glorious! When He returns, life will be so good that our previous sufferings will be eclipsed (v.18).

But before all this there will be suffering – like in child birth. A lot of pain will have to be endured before something new is born.

What do we do with these ideas? Groan like a believer, but don't despair. Groan, feel the pain of what should not be. Then add some good to the situation (where you can) knowing the ultimate good is coming. Don't despair. Despair is for those who think that this is as good as it gets and there is no future.

**Reverend Denis Oliver**  
College Chaplain

---