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Dear friends,

Service to the wider community appears to be an old fashioned value to many people. Yet the fact that there are people who have the desire to assist the wider community by using their God given gifts and talents is an essential part of community life. It is one of the realities of life that helps to make our villages good places in which to live. Locally we see this with numerous community groups and societies. One such organisation is the Ingatestone and Fryerning Nursing Trust. This has existed for many years and really began as a way for the clergy of the two parishes to assist those in need. In recent years the Trust has helped to fund such items as a tilting chair, a wheel chair and a help-line telephone. For eighteen years Tony Kidd has been Secretary of the Trust. Eric Butler has been a member of the Trust committee for a number of years, latterly as Chairman. They both now wish to retire from their positions. I know I speak on behalf of the wider community in thanking them for their unpaid work on behalf of everyone.

It saddens me to hear that a collector for Christian Aid was asked on a doorstep, "what is in it for you?" When they responded that there was no financial reward and they did it to help others in Third World countries that are in desperate need, the response was a mixture of disbelief and also that they were idiotic to undertake the activity. Of course they were given no money. What a sad indictment on the lives of some people and the values by which they live. It is just the opposite attitude to that of service to others for the greater good of all.

June 19th brings a very exciting development in the Churches working Together in the village. Following on from our New Year's Eve service, Lent booklets, Lent courses, Good Friday activities and open-air Pentecost service, we have a quiet afternoon at the Roman Catholic House of Prayer in Navestock.

Here the House and Chapel are set amid ten acres where people will be able to walk. From 12 o'clock tea, coffee and soup will be provided, with those coming bringing their own sandwiches. Monsignor Christopher Brooks will give two talks, at 2 o'clock and 3.30, on the Catholic understanding of the Eucharist. I will end the organised part of the afternoon with a time of prayer and praise. A donation of £5 is asked for towards costs. In the light of Pope Benedict 16th wishing to explore closer links with other Christians, we are demonstrating how we can learn from and with each other, to over-come much of the misunderstanding and mistrust of the past.

I hope Sunday 26th of June is firmly in your diary. Revd Sue Cruse will be ordained Priest that morning at The Parish Church of St. Peter in Prittlewell. Ticket allocation is limited, so we all apologize if you would have liked to be there, but cannot. However, do come and join everyone for a BBQ at St. Edmund and St. Mary Church during the afternoon. Sue will then celebrate at a Common Worship Communion Service, starting at 6 o'clock. Sue will be pleased to tell you individually how many years it is since she began the part of her Christian journey that is reaching this very significant milestone. I know both Sue and Bishop Laurie are delighted that we can arrange for Sue to celebrate communion for the first time on the day she is ordained Priest. I had to wait some time and I know how difficult that felt. It will be a wonderful and joyous time and I hope you can be there to share in the celebration.

Of course Sue is a Non Stipendiary Minister. It appears strange to label someone by something they do not receive. The stipend is the name for the salary and benefits I receive from the Church of England. Sue receives no stipend. I know that people have asked her why she does what she does when, "there is nothing in it for you". I know she answers about how much she receives in other ways through the privilege of ministry.

The values by which a Christian lives are supposed to be different from those around us. Let us thank God that not everyone lives by the maxim, "what is in it for me?"

Yours in Christ, *Patrick.*