

Agricultural chaplain comments, 2019

With parliament in turmoil, members deserting the electorate who voted them in, in the first place and still no decision on 'Brexit' but farming has to carry on. They cannot wait for the unknown final vote. By the time you read this it is hoped there will be a decision.

A very dry January and February is causing concern as the water table is very low, with reservoirs from natural storage, below half full. The vegetable growers and light land farmers will be most affected. Thinking of vegetable growers who have relied on migrant workers are having to rethink what to grow in future, as we have heard on the news Europeans are not coming here because conditions have improved in their own countries when it comes to employment opportunities.

As I write this in early March spring drilling is already taking place in soil conditions we might expect at the end of March or early April. A year ago we had snow and wet which went on until April. I just hope that what has been planted farmers will be able to market making a return on their investment.

A few observations about livestock, Milk producers still giving up, 106 left milk production in January. There comes a time when producing at a loss has to cease. The same criteria could be applied for pigs, feed prices rising and just about breaking even, depending on how efficient the farmers are, whether indoor or outdoor. Certainly outdoor have benefitted from the recent weather.

Yes, 'God is good' and as we prayed on plough Sunday, blessing the crops already sown and for the anticipation of others sown later. Let's hope that parliament will find some common sense. There are other issues to be sorted like the Agricultural bill which would give farmers some comfort that a decision had been made.

George W Frost.