

# St Andrew's Day 2020: Alister Jack's message

St Andrew's Day is a chance for us to celebrate all that is great about Scotland, and Scots, and to reflect on what it means to be Scottish.

In 2020, St Andrew's Day will feel very different.

We are living through a global pandemic. Our lives are almost unrecognisable from a year ago.

But I believe that, this year more than ever, we should take the time to mark just how much we have collectively achieved.

Over the past few months, we have risen to the challenge of the, frankly terrifying, virus. We have, and are, all doing our bit to defeat it. We have made huge personal sacrifices because we know it will save lives and protect our precious NHS.

Our frontline workers – from health care staff to supermarket workers, teachers and everyone in between – have been nothing short of heroic. Looking after the ill, supporting the vulnerable, and keeping the country going. You are an inspiration to us all.

So many others have also done their bit. From picking up shopping and prescriptions, to organising spirit-lifting video chats and amazing charity fundraisers – individuals up and down the land have gone out of their way to look after friends, relatives and neighbours, and also strangers in need.

We have much to be proud of. In 2020, it seems to me, being Scottish is about fortitude and kindness. And also optimism. With new vaccines on the way we are starting to see some light at the end of the covid tunnel.

So, this St Andrew's Day, I ask you to join me in thanking everyone who has done their bit to help us all get through 2020 so far. I have never felt more proud to be Scottish.