



What is Easter?

The disciples hide in a room, separated from everyone outside, with a fair bit of fear as to what is happening! Sound a little familiar – *anyone would think they were in isolation!*

So there is a sense of a few reminders to us at this time.

- No locked door can keep Jesus from us;
- In our isolation Jesus desires to bring us peace;
- We are never truly alone – there are people who want to be with us;
- We may doubt the future, but Christ reminds us that we only need to believe in life!

It's an interesting conversation and thought process to reflect at this time as regards to what will we take from this time of isolation? I had a conversation with a school principal during the week and she was saying that she feels a new understanding of "what" education is may come from this "social experiment" with our schools. Her experience is that students are missing the interactions, not only with other students, but with teachers. That they need that physical interactions to build a foundation of becoming a "rounded" person. Raw education can be achieved through technology, but maybe this experience will remind educators that their presence is so much more important than teaching knowledge and may inspire them to even more deeply live that out in their vocation as teacher.

Around the lunchroom table we were also discussing what the positives may be that come from this experience.

We wondered (and hoped) it reminds everyone of our interconnectedness. Of the need for us to consciously be aware of how our lives impact others. Not just the passing of an illness, but the way we treat others. Maybe we will rethink our attitude regarding our competitive or busy lives. *I invite you to take a moment to consider what lasting impact or viewpoint will this experience leave you with?* Thomas' symbol of doubt is real for each of us. He reminds us that doubting is a natural thing to do, but Jesus reminds us that with a little help it is a temporary state of being. Our faith is not in the Christ on the cross, but the risen Christ – the greatest expression of new life – WE ARE AN EASTER PEOPLE! The final part of the story this weekend's gospel offers us is to CHANGE! The disciples locked the doors, but Jesus still stood amongst them – for they are the ones who now have entered the tomb, and closed the stone over the opening. They are challenged by Christ to throw open the doors of their tomb and to walk out into the light and to discover –



- Peace in the chaos;
- Belief in the face of doubt;
- Light in darkness;
- Presence instead of absence;
- Life instead of death;
- Change instead of fear;
- Love and mercy instead of locked doors;
- Joy of living in place of sadness and worry.

Let us be the disciples who even currently with our doors closed, hear the words of Christ – "Peace be with YOU!"

God's blessings on your journey,
Fr. Michael.

Living the Eucharist - Reflections for this time of Coronavirus

We are in a time of uncertainty and worry. We look at what is happening with the coronavirus here and overseas and do not know what we will have to face tomorrow. Alongside this, our church buildings are closed and we are missing the nourishment of sharing Eucharist together.

In this very unusual situation, I feel this is a good time to reflect upon Eucharist and how we live the Eucharist in our daily lives. Often when we think of Eucharist, we think of what we receive. We think of the nourishment and strength that we gain because we have experienced Jesus through the Eucharist. I want to expand on this experience and say that the grace that we receive is given by God for a purpose. The nourishment and strength we experience in the Eucharist is, in fact, also a call and a challenge to live like Jesus. We are called to act so that others experience something of Jesus through us and that God's reign is experienced in our world.

In the Eucharistic prayer, we join ourselves with the suffering, crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus. We are mindful that it was Jesus' words and actions of God's love and justice that led to his crucifixion. Jesus died because he was faithful to the one he called 'Abba, Father'. It is Jesus' ministry that is to shape us and inspire us to live the Eucharist each day. So the more that we can learn about his ministry the more we understand how to live Eucharist.

Jesus' announcement that the reign of God is at hand shaped his ministry. It also inspires us to try and make real God's presence and purpose within the communities in which we live. Living the Eucharist is about contributing to God's reign being experienced in the world. God seeks to transform the world so that God's sense of right relationships are lived. This means we are called to live compassionately, justly and ecologically. These all flow from receiving Eucharist.

While we are maintaining isolation or limited activities, it is good to reflect on practical ways of how we can be Eucharist to others. Who do we know who needs a phone call, groceries or assistance with accessing medical care? How can we still support Caritas in its many works? How can we learn more about some of the issues in our world? How can we consume less and live more simply at this time? How can we better live the Eucharist?

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