

In these weeks, the lives of millions of people have suddenly changed. For many, remaining at home has been an opportunity to reflect, to withdraw from the frenetic pace of life, stay with loved ones and enjoy their company. For many, though, this is also a time of worry about an uncertain future, about jobs that are at risk and about other consequences of the current crisis. I encourage political leaders to work actively for the common good, to provide the means and resources needed to enable everyone to lead a dignified life and, when circumstances allow, to assist them in resuming their normal daily activities.

Dear brothers and sisters, indifference, self-centredness, division and forgetfulness are not words we want to hear at this time. We want to ban these words for ever! They seem to prevail when fear and death overwhelm us, that is, when we do not let the Lord Jesus triumph in our hearts and lives. May Christ, who has already defeated death and opened for us the way to eternal salvation, dispel the darkness of our suffering humanity and lead us into the light of his glorious day, a day that knows no end.

Sign of the Cross

+ In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Please remember in your prayers

Those who are ill, including . . .

Neil Abrahams, Isabella Ayres, Mary Brennan, Lesley Carroll, Tom Coddington, Pat and Janet Defreitas, Brenda Duke, Father Paul Dynan, Compton Glasgow, Father Tom Jordan, Eddie Margot, Gary Martindill, Maureen Mongan, Helen Murray, Sue Read, Stephen Smithers, Sue Spelling and Mary Treston.

Those who have died recently, including . . .

Terry Cason, Kath's husband, died on Maundy Thursday. His Funeral takes place on Thursday 23 April - we keep him and his family in our prayers.

Those whose anniversaries are recalled at this time, including . . .

18-24 April: Henry Fordham, Helen Dean, Genevieve Percival, Dennis Kelleher, David McGoay, Evelyn Collis, Michael O'Shea, Joseph Spelling, Hector Stratton, Denis Miller, Patricia McDermott, Kathleen Pow, Samantha Read, Sheila Casey, Mick Rubery, Mabel Mullin, Lily McCabe, Rose Reilly and Kathleen Mullane.

THE CHAPEL OF OUR LADY

This week, the light burning in honour of Our Lady is in memory of Joe and Michael Spelling.

from this year's Good Friday sermon of the papal preacher, Father Raniero Cantalamessa:

'God is our ally, not the ally of the virus! If these scourges were punishments of God, it would not be explained why they strike equally good and bad, and why the poor usually suffer the worst consequences of them. Are they more sinners than others? No! The one who cried one day for Lazarus' death cries today for the scourge that has fallen on humanity. Yes, God "suffers", like every father and like every mother. When we will find this out one day, we will be ashamed of all the accusations we made against him in life. God participates in our pain to overcome it. Did God the Father possibly desire the death of his Son in order to draw good out of it? No, he simply permitted human freedom to take its course, making it serve, however, his own purposes and not those of human beings. This is also the case for natural disasters like earthquakes and plagues. He does not bring them about. He has given nature a kind of freedom as well, qualitatively different of course than that of human beings, but still a form of freedom — freedom to evolve according to its own laws of development. He did not create the world as a programmed clock whose movements could all be anticipated. It is what some call "chance", but the Bible calls "the wisdom of God."

PARISH OFFERINGS

Our thanks to those who have Standing Orders for their giving; last month these came to £1712.75.

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Second Sunday of Easter *Prayers and Readings* 18-19 April 2020



*May you be filled with joy and hope
as we celebrate the resurrection.
Christ has conquered death
and is risen to newness of life!*

*Due to the Coronavirus pandemic, all public acts of worship
in Catholic churches throughout Britain are suspended
and churches are locked until further notice.*

*This newsletter includes readings and prayers from Sunday's Mass,
which you might like to use
as an aid to personal prayer and reflection.*

SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION

available at any time on request

PARISH OFFICE HOURS

Monday to Friday : 9.00 am – 12.00 noon

PARISH WEBSITE

www.corpuschristicollierrow.org

(for use at home)

Sign of the Cross

+ In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Prayer

God of everlasting mercy,
who, in the very recurrence of the paschal feast
kindle the faith of the people you have made your own,
increase, we pray, the grace you have bestowed,
that all may grasp and rightly understand
in what font they have been washed,
by whose Spirit they have been reborn,
by whose Blood they have been redeemed.
Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

First Reading

Acts 2: 42-47

A reading from the Acts of the Apostles.

The whole community remained faithful to the teaching of the apostles, to the brotherhood, to the breaking of bread and to the prayers. The many miracles and signs worked through the apostles made a deep impression on everyone. The faithful all lived together and owned everything in common; they sold their goods and possessions and shared out the proceeds among themselves

according to what each one needed. They went as a body to the Temple every day but met in their houses for the breaking of bread; they shared their food gladly and generously; they praised God and were looked up to by everyone. Day by day the Lord added to their community those destined to be saved.

Psalm

Ps 117

Give thanks to the Lord for he is good, for his love has no end.

Let the sons of Israel say: "His love has no end."

Let the sons of Aaron say: "His love has no end."

Let those who fear the Lord say: "His love has no end."

I was thrust, thrust down and falling but the Lord was my helper.

The Lord is my strength and my song; he was my saviour.

There are shouts of joy and victory in the tents of the just.

The stone which the builders rejected has become the corner stone.

This is the work of the Lord, a marvel in our eyes.

This day was made by the Lord; we rejoice and are glad.

Second Reading

I Peter 1: 3-9

A reading from the first letter of St Peter

Blessed be God the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who in his great mercy has given us a new birth as his sons, by raising Jesus Christ from the dead, so that we have a sure hope and the promise of an inheritance that can never be spoilt or soiled and never fade away, because it is being kept for you in the heavens. Through your faith, God's power will guard you until the salvation which has been prepared is revealed at the end of time. This is a cause of great joy for you, even though you may for a short time have to bear being plagued by all sorts of trials; so that, when Jesus Christ is revealed, your faith will have been tested and proved like gold – only it is more precious than gold, which is corruptible even though it bears testing by fire – and then you will have praise and glory and honour. You did not see him, yet you love him; and still without seeing him, you are already filled with a joy so glorious that it cannot be described, because you believe; and you are sure of the end to which your faith looks forward, that is, the salvation of your souls.

Gospel Reading

John 20: 19-31

A reading from the holy Gospel according to John.

In the evening of that same day, the first day of the week, the doors were closed in the room where the disciples were, for fear of the Jews. Jesus came and stood among them. He said to them, "Peace be with you," and showed them his hands and his side. The disciples were filled with joy when they saw the Lord, and he said to them again, "Peace be with you. "As the Father sent me, so am I sending you." After saying this he breathed on them and said: "Receive the Holy Spirit. For those whose sins you forgive, they are forgiven; for those whose sins you retain, they are retained."

Thomas, called the Twin, who was one of the Twelve, was not with them when Jesus came. When the disciples said, "We have seen the Lord," he answered, "Unless I see the holes that the nails made in his hands and can put my finger into the holes they made, and unless I can put my hand into his side, I refuse to believe."

Eight days later the disciples were in the house again and Thomas was with them. The doors were closed, but Jesus came in and stood among them. "Peace be with you," he said. Then he spoke to Thomas, "Put your finger here; look, here are my hands. Give me your hand; put it into my side. Doubt no longer but believe." Thomas replied, "My Lord and my God!" Jesus said to him: "You believe because you can see me. Happy are those who have not seen and yet believe."

There were many other signs that Jesus worked and the disciples saw, but they are not recorded in this book. These are recorded so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing this you may have life through his name.

Spiritual Communion

written by St Alphonsus Ligouri

My Jesus,

I believe that you are present in the Holy Sacrament of the altar.

I love you above all things

and I passionately desire to receive you into my soul.

Since I cannot now receive you sacramentally,

come spiritually into my soul

so that I may unite myself wholly to you now and for ever.

Amen.

Reflection

Pope Francis, from the *'Urbi et Orbi'* Blessing, Easter Day 2020

Dear brothers and sisters, Happy Easter!

Today the Church's proclamation echoes throughout the world: "Jesus Christ is risen!" – "He is truly risen!".

Like a new flame this Good News springs up in the night: the night of a world already faced with epochal challenges and now oppressed by a pandemic severely testing our whole human family. In this night, the Church's voice rings out: "Christ, my hope, has arisen!" (Easter Sequence).

This is a different "contagion", a message transmitted from heart to heart – for every human heart awaits this Good News. It is the contagion of hope: "Christ, my hope, is risen!". This is no magic formula that makes problems vanish. No, the resurrection of Christ is not that. Instead, it is the victory of love over the root of evil, a victory that does not "by-pass" suffering and death, but passes through them, opening a path in the abyss, transforming evil into good: this is the unique hallmark of the power of God.

The Risen Lord is also the Crucified One, not someone else. In his glorious body he bears indelible wounds: wounds that have become windows of hope. Let us turn our gaze to him that he may heal the wounds of an afflicted humanity.

Today my thoughts turn in the first place to the many who have been directly affected by the coronavirus: the sick, those who have died and family members who mourn the loss of their loved ones, to whom, in some cases, they were unable even to bid a final farewell. May the Lord of life welcome the departed into his kingdom and grant comfort and hope to those still suffering, especially the elderly and those who are alone. May he never withdraw his consolation and help from those who are especially vulnerable, such as persons who work in nursing homes, or live in barracks and prisons. For many, this is an Easter of solitude lived amid the sorrow and hardship that the pandemic is causing, from physical suffering to economic difficulties.

This disease has not only deprived us of human closeness, but also of the possibility of receiving in person the consolation that flows from the sacraments, particularly the Eucharist and Reconciliation. In many countries, it has not been possible to approach them, but the Lord has not left us alone! United in our prayer, we are convinced that he has laid his hand upon us (cf. Ps 138:5), firmly reassuring us: Do not be afraid, "I have risen and I am with you still!" (cf. **Roman Missal**, *Entrance Antiphon*, Mass of Easter Sunday).

May Jesus, our Passover, grant strength and hope to doctors and nurses, who everywhere offer a witness of care and love for our neighbours, to the point of exhaustion and not infrequently at the expense of their own health. Our gratitude and affection go to them, to all who work diligently to guarantee the essential services necessary for civil society, and to the law enforcement and military personnel who in many countries have helped ease people's difficulties and sufferings.