

Homily. Easter Sunday. Year.A. 11/12 April 2020.

I am writing to you from the silence of my home, living with you as I do in our Parish. Like so many of you I find myself often alone, cut off from my family and friends who are far away, and distanced from my support network. In a most particular and painful way I miss you, the people and my family of faith, our Parish of Corinda Graceville.

We've come now to this sacred and special time in our Christian lives, the time of Jesus' self-giving death and glorious resurrection. We thought that we'd be celebrating the Lord's love and victory together in our Churches with our hearts and minds one in His Spirit. Instead, because of this most extraordinary time in human history, we're scattered, locked down, bunkered down, isolated in so many ways from what we have until now known as normal life. Yet, despite this physical separation, I'm still able to reach you in your homes and hearts through these words, so I thank you for welcoming me in as a member of your family this Easter-time.

As is well known, evil people and bad things always try to scatter and sunder us apart. Holy people and good works always strive to unite and bring people into unity. Covid 19 is a bad thing for the human race, pushing us away and apart from one another. We accept and willingly cooperate with our separation so that we can lovingly protect and shield from disease and death as many as possible. Today, and for many days and nights to come, such is the sacrifice we offer. By our faith we choose to join our loving self-giving to that of Christ on Calvary's Cross. Think of it as your gift and sacrifice offered for the good of the entire community.

I have said that we do this 'by faith' because it is our faith alone that makes sense and gives meaning to the sacrifices and privations we're making. Our faith is not in the Cross, and nothing else. If it were then we'd belong to some kind of 'death cult' and certainly, we don't! Instead our faith points us unerringly to Christ Crucified **and** Risen, the Lord of Life and the Saviour of the World. Our faith is in New Life through the gateway of Cross. Our faith is an Easter faith in the Risen Lord, victorious over sin, separation, sundering and death in all of its manifestations. This is the Easter message that Jesus, our hope and strength, speaks to us so urgently this year. It has to be heard and shared by each and every one of us with great passion and steadfast conviction in these difficult days.

While we celebrate our Easter at home using the many resources offered on our Parish website and FaceBook page, tuning into the Mass from St. Stephen's cathedral, I assure you that I am with you as best I'm able; in my prayer, in my heart and mind, and in my efforts to reach out to you by whatever means I can find. If the Gethsemane experience, trials and some sacrifices mark out the present, they are part of our sharing with Christ. What's more, they and our losses aren't the sum of our worth, nor the end of the story of our lives any more than they were for Him who now lives and reigns forever and ever. Join me and all our people in letting the Light of Christ shine on us, a light that no darkness can ever overcome. Peace be with all of you at Easter. Fr. Mark Percival. MA,PP.