

FATHER ANDY WRITES...

First of all, I want to remember all mothers living and dead on this Mothering Sunday. They are close to our hearts always, even if they cannot physically be present. They are all in our prayers.

These are strange times indeed – the Church closing their doors to the public BEFORE the pubs closed their doors – a paradox indeed! Masses are still going on in private(ish) ways praying for all those who have died, suffering from and looking after those with the coronavirus.

I just want to remind everyone that we are an Easter People, with hope and courage in our hearts and that we should not be frightened – especially of each other. Remember if other people laugh at you, you can have compassion for them. But if you laugh at them, you may never forgive yourself. If other people hurt you, you may forget the hurt. But if you hurt them, you will always remember. In truth the other person is your most sensitive self given another body. This is what Jesus meant when he said that we must love our neighbour, as we love ourselves – there really is no difference. Loving your neighbour is like breathing out and loving self is like breathing in. You cannot have one without the other. You cannot live on in-breaths alone; you cannot live on out-breaths alone. They always come together. Loving neighbour and loving self always come together.

It is unfortunate that we are unable to hear the voices of women speak in our churches today, but it looks like God has got some greater plans awaiting us. So we wait in anticipation for the time we can come back together and celebrate our great women in the Church.

I pray that we do not get too used to “social/physical distancing” because that too can become a more destructive spiritual disease. A person’s eyes that have become accustomed to the dim light of candles cannot behold the sunlight. Spiritual disease grows undetected until it becomes part of people, who look upon it not as a disease, but as a natural God given gift. If those people found someone free from the “germs” of this disease, they would think of them with shame and disgrace.

Please God, our Father, keep and protect us from losing sight of who we truly are – we are an Easter People, who like the rainbow only come to life in times of rain. We can and will flourish and become more fully alive in times of trouble and hardship. May the Lord be with you to protect you, may he guide you and give you strength. May the Lord watch over you, keep you in his care and bring you peace.

Amen