

Webcam Broadcast C-19 7

Hello Everyone! This Recording is for the week beginning 4th May 2020. I hope you are all safe and well.

I've noticed at times during this crisis that a feeling comes over me that somehow, despite the calamity, things will work out for the good of all. How? or Why? or When? I do not know.

I get a sense of this assurance when I notice the clear blue sky on these lovely days we've had since the crisis began, or breathe in the clean, fresh air.

I sense it in the bugling of a blackbird high in a tree, or in noticing 4 eggs in a thrush's nest, camouflaged right in front of me.

It's reassuring to know that the little lambs are playing in the fields even though we can't go to see them at the moment.

I'm reminded of words written by the English Mystic, Julian of Norwich, who lived through the latter half of the fourteenth century, during a plague referred to as the Black Death.

In the language of today, she had to self-isolate or cocoon for a long time in order to survive. The poet T. S. Eliot brought her words to light in his poem called Little Gidding, the fourth of his Four Quartets, published during World War II:

***And all shall be well and
All manner of thing shall be well.***

I know that people miss and more than miss Mass and Holy Communion and all else associated with Church, such as Baptisms, First Holy Communion and Confirmation, and dropping in to say a prayer and light a candle.

I miss the congregation. I think it is important to register that while the church building is closed, the Church, the People of God, is not closed.

I continue to offer Mass each day for the intentions of all parishioners. And as you know the Mass is not open to the public but is broadcast on Webcam.

Funerals continue to take place, though under severe restrictions.

People at home continue to manage the best they can in the circumstances.

Parents continue to bring up their children to know and live by Gospel Values.

Many people volunteer to help in the community any way they can, providing and delivering meals to those cocooning, doing their shopping and running errands.

All of this is the true Church in action.

Last time I raised a number of questions for consideration.

Here's another: Where do I hear the voice of God during this pandemic? Normal access to the Sacraments has been put on hold at present, so, How can we access God, how can we hear the voice of God?

Pope Francis reassures us that despite not being able to go to Confession, our sins are forgiven if we say we are sorry to God with the intention of going to Confession whenever that becomes possible again.

We also have the Act of Spiritual Communion. This again is an ancient and practical tradition of the Church. If you cannot receive Holy Communion sacramentally, you can always receive Holy Communion spiritually.

We may further wonder how we can access God when all our usual channels are blocked. Well, God is present in his Word in Sacred Scripture. The Scripture Readings for Mass each day are posted on the Parish Website. Reflect on them and discover what it says in Psalm 119:105:

Your Word is a lamp for my steps and a light for my path.

Another way to access God is through nature. And we are all now noticing more fresh air, birdsong, bees and flowers.

The Prophet Jeremiah wrote a letter to the Exiles in Babylon who were suffering greatly under harsh oppression. He spoke God's Word to them as follows:

For surely I know the plans I have for you, says the Lord, plans for your welfare and not for your harm, to give you a future with hope. Then when you call upon me and come and pray to me, I will hear you. When you search for me, you will find me; if you seek me with all your heart, I will let you find me, says the Lord, and I will restore your fortunes. Jer 29:11-14.

Yet another way we can access God is through following the HSE Guidelines. These enable us to look out for one another and to keep each other safe. This is what Jesus meant when he said: *Love your neighbour as yourself.*

We're in the month of May, dedicated to the Blessed Virgin Mary. Why not organise a May Altar at home and use it as a focus for prayer. Pope Francis has asked the Catholics Faithful around the world to pray the Rosary at home in the month of May. Make it a prayer that Mary will pray that God will stretch out his all-powerful hand and free us from this terrible pandemic. If you can't pray the full Rosary why not try one decade at a time.

Covid-19 is still in the community. So: Stay safe. Stay apart. Practice proper hand hygiene and coughing etiquette. This is how we save lives.

Until next time.

Slán agus beannacht.