

Webcam Broadcast C-19 26+10

Hello Everyone! I hope you are all safe and well.

It's Monday 7th December 2020.

My basic Message this Monday is:

Even though we are going through a rough time with the Covid-19 Pandemic, nevertheless, we still have much to be grateful for, and gratitude is at the heart of our celebration of the Birth of Jesus at Christmas.

Last time I focused a little on the great virtue of Hope, which is a gift from God, given to sustain us through difficult times like now. We stake our hope on Jesus, the Son of God, sent to save us.

I read recently that the Hymn, “Now Thank We All Our God”, was written by a German Evangelical Pastor whose name was Martin Rinkart. He lived through the Thirty Years War (1618-1648). He wrote the hymn as a table grace for his family. He was the only clergyman left in his town, and he spent a lot of time burying the dead in consequence of war and pestilence.

We do well to ponder this simple table prayer of gratitude amid the time of Pandemic we are in today:

***Now thank we all our God with hearts and hands and voices,
who wondrous things hath done, in whom the world rejoices;
who, from our mothers' arms, hath blessed us on our way
with countless gifts of love, and still is ours today.***

***O may this bounteous God through all our life be near us,
with ever joyful hearts and blessed peace to cheer us;
and keep us in God's grace, and guide us when perplexed,
and free us from all ills in this world and the next.***

**In the midst of desolation, Rinkart wrote and sang of thanks!
The hymn celebrates the “wondrous things” done by “this bounteous God.” We can picture Pastor Rinkart with his children counting out, one by one, “countless gifts of love.”**

The hymn invites us to cling to God’s grace that “frees us from all ills” in all imaginable futures.

His words are an echo of the promise of recovery for the People of Israel spoken by the prophet Jeremiah during the desolation of the Exile:

*Give thanks to the Lord of hosts,
for the Lord is good,
for his steadfast love endures forever! (Jer 33:11).*

Gratitude is an affirmation of goodness. We affirm that there are good things in the world, gifts and benefits that we have received in our own lives.

Gratitude helps us recognise that the sources of this goodness are outside ourselves, in other people and in God who gave us many gifts, big and small, to help us achieve the goodness in our lives.

Make an opportunity for yourself, and your family if you can manage it, to do what Pastor Rinkart did, count out one by one the countless gifts of love that are part of your life, and express gratitude for them.

Perhaps write out the list and place it in your Prayer Space.

During this Second Week of Advent we pray:

*O Lord, stir up our hearts that we may prepare
for your only begotten Son,
that through his coming we may be made worthy
to serve you with pure minds.
Through Christ, Our Lord. Amen.*

Come, Lord Jesus, do not delay!

Tóg bog é.

Until next time.

Keep safe.

Slán agus beannacht.