

April 2020 Newsletter

Prayer in the time of COVID-19

Over recent weeks we have all been challenged on many levels; psychologically, socially, emotionally, spiritually and financially.

I was recently asked why we would pray if God knows everything. In this time of COVID-19 what is the use of prayer?

The answer to what is prayer can be as many as how many people there are. Yes for many it may be the formal prayers we were taught at school. Prayer can take many forms: words, thoughts and actions. There are prayers of thanks, petition, aspiration, reverence etc. My own take on prayer is that it is about our intention and our trying to be a better person, not just for myself but as my God would want me to be. I have a choice in how I want to be.

Since we have had to introduce a new way of operating due to COVID-19 I have spent the time between 11.00 and 1.00pm at the back gate often on my own. At times I have been able to interact with visitors as I have handed over the lunch and the brief chat as to how that person is going has been important to him/her as often they might not have a chance to engage with another person that day. This simple interaction depending upon the motivation can be a prayer. I know this but the other person does not need to know. The intention/motivation helps me to be a better person and hopefully helps the other person.

At other times whilst I have been outside I have been on my own; an opportunity to just sit and daydream or get fidgety as I wait for the next person or a time to reflect. I call this reflection prayer as I attempt to make sense of what is happening around me. I also use this time to just sit and mediate and try just 'to be'.

Humans are social beings so prayer can be almost anything that helps me to be a better human. It often comes down to motivation. My saying 'hello' to the stranger in the street as I pass by can merely be a nice thing to do however my intention is to acknowledge another human being and by saying hello help make it a better day for that person as s/he knows that s/he is just important as the next person. For me it also reconnects me with the fact that I live in a community not just my own little bubble. So in a way my acknowledging another person is a type of prayer.

Why pray in the time of COVID-19? We are social beings so being supportive of our fellow community members and trying to empathise with what is happening in their lives helps me to be a better person and being a better person brings me closer to my God. We have seen the best of people during this crisis: the shop keeper who 'keeps on keeping on' despite any anxiety about coronavirus, the hospital orderly who may often feel a low point on the

hierarchy of a hospital who continues to turn up every day to provide the absolutely necessary task of supporting the patients as they move about the hospital. These actions seen through the eyes of faith are prayers. As a society we have learnt of the term social distancing and this support of our fellow citizen done with the right intention can be a prayer of support to others.

What is prayer to you?

Damian

ANZAC Day

In war there are no real winners and losers. We are all losers! War is a dreadful sign of human failure. The dignity of the person can be lost, power can and often is misused and the innocent as much as the guilty suffer.

ANZAC Day is the day when we remember all the men and women who are serving and have served in our Defence Forces. In particular we are asked to recall those who gave the ultimate sacrifice for our country. We recall the heroic deeds, the sacrifices, and the preparedness to give without counting the cost.

If peace is to be maintained then there is a need for someone to be prepared to stand up to the bully and the thug. Thank God we have men and women who have been prepared to stand up and say "No" to those who have been prepared to take advantage of the poor and helpless, the meek and the lame.

As we celebrate this ANZAC Day it is not a day of sentimentality for war rather a day of remembrance for peace.

To all of our volunteers and visitors who have served we say thank you for without your sacrifices all we would have would be the memories of death and destruction. Yes we do remember the dead but we also remember the sacrifices of the living.

New Build Update

The builder has advised that they are on track to be finished before 29th May. Once the build is complete it is then available for the internal fitout. We will keep you posted as things progress.

