

Corpus Christi 2020

The number of people who have died during the coronavirus pandemic now runs into hundreds of thousands world wide, each death bringing heartache to those who have been bereaved. In the first 4 months of this year more than 3 million people have died of hunger in the world. Can we take in that number? This isn't called a pandemic because it does not affect all people, only the poorest and those whose lives are blighted by drought brought about by climate change and hoarding resources by some at the expense of the poorest. It is a kind of slavery from which there seems to be no escape and which has a long history as recent events have witnessed.

In the first reading today Moses reminds the people that it was God who brought them out of slavery. It wasn't an easy journey, they grumbled at the lack of food and drink, even when Moses reminded them that it was God who provided them with manna, bread from heaven, and who caused the water to pour out of the rock. It was a testing time, when they had to look deep into their hearts and see what was there, and reach even deeper into hidden resources and in so doing getting glimpses of the miracles that were taking place, something all of us need when the going is tough.

We sometimes have to make a similar kind of journey from places either internal or external which may not even be of our making but which are either painful or not good for us. On such occasions we need to know that God is with us and this often comes through the help of others. This may come in the form of advice or encouragement, it may be medical care or financial assistance, even something as simple as a smile, a phone call, a card sent with love. Sometimes we recognise our needs and accept what we are offered, at other times a certain stubbornness can arise and we think we know best and it is good to be aware that this can happen so we can move on.

Every time we celebrate Eucharist we are nourished by the word of God and we are offered the gift of Jesus, his life, his love and himself under the forms of bread and wine. At present, where churches are locked many people cannot receive the Eucharistic gifts, this will be temporary. For others it will be more permanent, not because of the pandemic, but because there is no access to Mass on a regular basis. We rejoice with Fr Luis and our friends in Nicaragua who will receive communion, joining them spiritually in prayer. Taking part in the Eucharist is more than personal prayer, it is a commitment to reaching out in solidarity to all those who are in dark places due to poverty, hunger, homelessness, war, prejudice, modern day slavery, people trafficking, the denial of human rights, migration, addictions, breakup of relationships and so much more. The journey from slavery to freedom, from dark places to the light is never easy and is rarely done alone. Our participation in this Mass this morning unites us with those who are suffering and reminds us that miracles continue to take place knowing that things can and will change for the better, especially if we allow ourselves to be transformed by God's love and help in the transformation of others by reaching out to them with compassion and tenderness.

Bidding Prayers for Corpus Christi

Celebrant:

Encouraged and challenged by the word of God we pray for the world, the Church and ourselves.

Reader:

For the Church – that nourished by God's word and the gift of Jesus under the forms of bread and wine, it will encourage all its members to work for the Common Good of all.

Lord in your mercy

For leaders and Governments – that in this World Refugee week they will do all they can to provide suitable accommodation, sufficient food and clothing and the help that refugees need to enjoy a better future.

Lord in your mercy

For those nations in our world who hoard food and other natural resources – that they will be moved to share their plenty with those who have nothing.

Lord in your mercy

For all Fathers on this Fathers' Day – that those who have died may be at peace with God and those still with us know the love of their children and grandchildren.

Lord in your mercy

For those who have died, all victims of violence, accident, natural disaster and coronavirus pandemic, for Margaret Muller who died recently and Raymond Long, Johanna Friedrich, John Collins, Dympna Howell, John Wade and Clare Byrne whose anniversaries occur this week – that they and all who have died may rest in peace and rise in glory.

Lord in your mercy

Either aloud or in silence we pray for our own special intentions...pause...then

Lord in your mercy

We ask the prayers of Mary as we say, Hail Mary...

Celebrant:

Lord Jesus Christ, you gave us the Eucharist as a memorial of your passion and death. May our sharing in this sacrament help us to reach out to our brothers and sisters in their need and to work for the peace and salvation of all. Through Christ our Lord. Amen