



St Thomas Aquinas Parish

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PASTORAL LETTER from Fr Paul PP

My Sisters and Brothers,

In this uncertain time, when a virus threatens us our entire Parish and our Church, our God reaches out to us.

We are all familiar with the guidelines implemented to protect us from COVID-19 and to stop its spread. They are sensible and need to be followed by us all. The need is for physical distance and self-isolation but these do not impact on our unity, community of faith and our prayer.

We all have family and friends separated from us by geography or hurt, yet we can still hold them in mind and heart and in our prayers. Isolation does not mean loneliness. Every day throughout our world the Church celebrates the Sacrament that makes us one with the Lord and His people. Every day we can unite ourselves with others in prayer and in love. When Fr Michael and I offer Mass you, and those you love, are remembered. Whether in light or darkness, the Church prays the Divine Office and you, and those you love, are remembered. We are not alone, no one is left alone, unloved or forgotten.

When we choose to pray, we gather in for quiet moments with the Lord. We are only lonely when we consult our fears rather than our hopes and dreams. Let our hope in the Risen Christ help dispel the fear and isolation that seems to surround us. Let us hold one another in prayer and love, that this fear may dispel, our hope fulfilled and our love deepened.

Please feel free to call or contact Fr Michael or myself by phone or email if you wish to talk or need help or support. The Parish and the Diocese are there with you and for you. The resources available are on our website and Facebook page. We will provide links to other resources and stream Mass in our parishes.

Let us remember that the Lord is always with us, and choose to live and witness the Gospel by the way we love and care for one another. So, in these troubled times when uncertainty and isolation can narrow our world and lives, let us listen deeply and serenely to the call of our gentle God.

I am reminded of the words of St Ignatius "A stream flows whispering inside me, deep within me it says Come to the Father" and when we do, let us bring with us those we hold in our hearts.

Fr. Paul