

聖安多尼堂



羊牧之聲

在疫症的陰影下重生

梁熾才



由於新型肺炎疫情，香港教區公布，自今年2月15日開始，所有堂區聖堂及轄下小堂暫停舉行公開彌撒。可能大家都沒想到，因這疫症大流行的緣故，是項措施要維持到今天。可幸，現在疫情日趨緩和，各行各業的復工復市相繼展開。而在聖堂舉行的公開平日彌撒有望於五月上旬恢復。疫情雖然得到緩和，但終止無期，大家還需注意防疫的基本措施，如戴口罩、勤洗手、保持社交距離、注意個人衛生等。

本堂區為在聖堂能重新舉行公開彌撒，亦做好了各種準備工夫。一方面，自疫症發生到現在本堂區都全日開放，並依照教區的指引，在聖堂可舉行婚禮及殯葬彌撒，並可為教友舉行明供聖體及聖經誦禱，已累積了一定的防疫經驗及做法。另外，為重新舉行公開彌撒所購置的防疫用品，亦已齊備。在堂區員工的努力下，加強清潔聖堂內外的地方；跪凳及書籍的清潔亦有人處理。不少教友義工負起進入聖堂的檢疫工作，在此特向他們致謝。聖堂的冷氣亦加強了抽風的功能，以及增加了消毒的裝置。

在這段沒有公開彌撒的日子裡，相信不少教

友跟隨教區指示，藉(a)收看網上直播或重播的主日彌撒及神領聖體；或(b)反省主日經文、閱讀聖經或誦念玫瑰經，來代替參與主日彌撒的本份，保持與天主的密切聯繫。不久後，在聖堂能重新舉行彌撒時，祝願大家以更大的熱心來參與聖事和堂區生活，與堂區團體一起奉獻感恩聖祭，並獲取聖事的實效。

今年，我們因疫症流行的關係，未能隆重舉行教會禮儀年最重要的節日——復活節。相信重新舉行公開的平日彌撒，可望於復活期第四或五週內舉行，而公開的主日彌撒，亦盼能於復活期內舉行。屆時，讓我們懷著經歷在疫症陰影下而得以重生的喜樂，來慶祝救主的復活。以色列民原來的逾越節，是慶祝脫免死亡，開始新的生活。逾越節也是在春天的節日，是大地回春、萬象更新的新開始。為我們基督信徒，「紀念基督苦難、聖死及復活的逾越節三日慶典，是整個禮儀年的中心與高峰。」（禮儀年18）讓我們企盼在復活期公開的彌撒中，補回慶祝基督戰勝罪惡和死亡，並帶給我們新生命的喜樂。讓我們重新參與彌撒和堂區生活，來表達一個新的開始，在基督的帶領下，脫離疫症和死亡的陰霾，不再返到我們舊有的生活方式，但以新的自由——天主子女的自由來生活。



2020年
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聖安多尼堂

堂區通訊

第597期

地址：香港薄扶林道69A
網址：<http://www.anthonychurch.org>

電話：25466221

傳真：25480661

E-mail：editorial@anthonychurch.org



二零二零年四月份牧民議會 議決事項

1. 傳信、禮儀及互愛委員會聯繫下屬善會，計劃不同具帶動性的活動，**準備教友**在恢復公開彌撒時**重新參與堂區生活**。
2. 堂區**專項事務小組**跟進舉行會議及提供方案，包括：(a)青少年工作發展小組；(b)福傳事工小組；(c)款待及公關小組；(d)維護及環境小組。
3. 計劃未來的**愛德工作**，包括派送「抗疫物品」、探訪服務、樂融融飯局等，並邀請教友參與。
4. **積極準備候洗者**領受入門聖事，融入堂區大家庭。安排聖體和堅振聖事班，籌備堂慶，以及策劃培育、神修和聯誼等活動。

二零二零年五月份禮儀生活 按教區指引：暫停公開彌撒【直至另行通告】

1. 依循教區為抗疫的特殊牧民措施，堂區作出以下安排：
 - **聖堂開放：每天：7:00am — 8:00pm**【教友靜默祈禱、朝拜聖體、履行善工】
 - **明供聖體：周一至六：7:30am — 9:00am / 周四：7:00pm — 8:00pm**
【特別意向：疫症早日平息】
 - **告解時段：周一、三、五：8:00am — 8:30am**
主日：8:00am — 8:30am；9:30am — 10:00am；11:00am — 11:30am
教友可個別接觸神父辦「修和聖事」
2. **主日明供聖體：**(a) 8:30am — 9:30am；(b) 10:00am — 11:00am；(c) 11:30am — 12:30pm (英文)
每個時段安排：聆聽主日讀經、神父講道、為抗疫祈禱、聖體降福
3. 教友可**採用下列方式替代參與主日彌撒的本份：**
(a)觀看任何網上直播或重溫的主日彌撒(如教區網站www.catholic.org.hk及教區視聽中心網站<https://hkdvcc.com/live-mass/>)，神領聖體；或
(b)反省主日彌撒經文、閱讀聖經或誦念玫瑰經
4. 教友可**善用網上服務**，例如網上平日彌撒、信仰培育資訊、各種善工及神業，如晨禱、玫瑰經、三鐘經等(參見以上網站及第三頁資訊)。



鳴謝捐贈《羊牧之聲》

願聖母進教之佑及聖安多尼酬謝你們，
賜你們身心健康，家庭和睦，主寵日隆。

葉衛熾瑞	\$1000	曾潔玲	\$100
潘宅	\$200	鄭雅蓮	\$100
聖安多尼之友會	\$300	精叻馬	\$200
雷達天	\$100	鮑思高聖詠團	\$600
太極福傳會	\$500	譚歡天	\$200



聖母月：熱心祈禱 誦念玫瑰經

特別意向：

為候洗者、各國元首、克服疫症、醫護人員、受苦者、天下母親

聖母瑪利亞是憂苦之慰，願她擁抱所有心神不寧的兒女，懇求「天主伸出大能的手，解救世人擺脫恐怖的新冠傳染病疫，讓生活得以寧靜地回歸正軌」。

堂區的聖母進教者之佑會於五月份，每個主日提供一周的「每日聖言分享」，方便教友作為「讀聖書，做默想」的參考。



教宗提供向聖母懇求禱詞

聖母瑪利亞，妳總是在我們生命的旅途中閃耀發光，一如救恩和希望的標記。我們將自己託付於妳、病人之痊。妳持守著堅定的信德，在十字架下參與耶穌的苦難。

妳，羅馬人民的救援，明瞭我們的需要；我們確信妳的照顧。一如在加里肋亞加納，在這考驗的時期過後，妳將恢復我們的喜樂與歡慶。

天主仁愛之母，請幫助我們眾人順從天父的旨意，並實踐耶穌所吩咐的；他承擔了我們的苦難，藉著十字架，引領我們到達復活的喜樂。亞孟。

天主聖母，我們投奔到妳的保護下。噢！榮福童貞瑪利亞，請勿輕忽我們在急需中的懇求，但救我們免於一切危險。

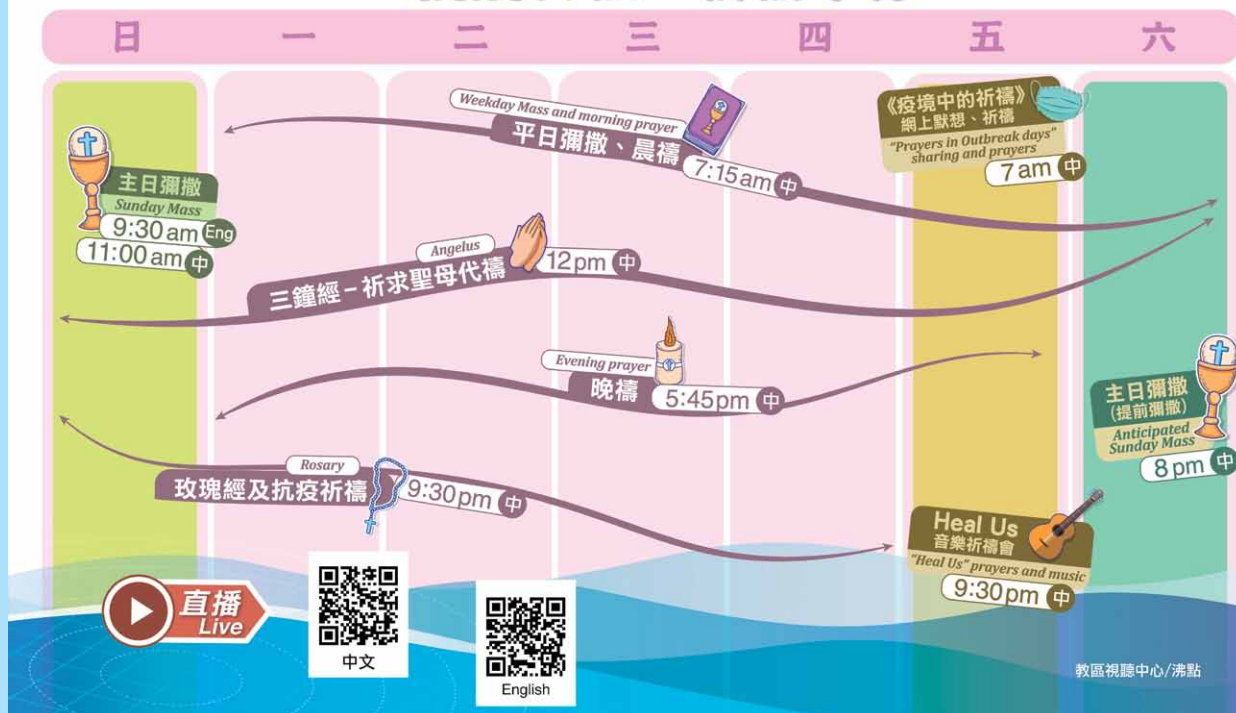
許多國家的信友將在居家隔離防疫中迎來今年的五月聖母月。教宗方濟各鼓勵眾人依循傳統在家誦念《玫瑰經》，並表明：「與聖母同心默觀基督的面容，將使我們變得更加團結，在精神上互為家人，並有助於我們度過當前的難關。」上述禱詞可於玫瑰經結束時誦念。



直播彌撒及靈修活動

Holy Mass, Prayers & Devotions Webcast Spiritual well-being in pandemic days

抗疫日程·祈禱不停



候洗者心聲： 準備領受入門聖事

04

堂區資訊



游仙莉

在慕道班八個月，導師的循循善誘，同學之間的互相幫助，令我更加融入天主教這個大家庭，非常感恩天主賜給我這個學習的機會，讓我內心充滿了喜樂和平安。



陳特豪

經過一年多的慕道學習，認識了耶穌基督的道理和生活，對我很大的正面影響。雖然疫情影響我們領洗的進程，但絕對不會影響我對接受洗禮的決心。希望疫情盡快過去，所有受影響的人獲得平安，染病的人得到治癒，逝世的人得享安息。



區靜洲

今年因為疫情的關係，我們慕道班同學也會延遲領受入門聖事，但是藉著天主的慈愛，基督的聖寵，聖神的恩賜，我們獲享平安。在早課和晚課中誠心祈禱，求主啟示，懷著感恩、謙遜、信心和恆心祈禱，希望疫情早日過去，社會回復安寧。我期望早日領受聖洗之恩寵，成為天主大家庭的一份子。雖然我們受過多次困難、挫折，但我們有信心去克服，因為天主自有安排。我會堅持學習信仰，憑著天父的慈愛，基督的聖寵，聖神的恩賜，靈性生命必繼續增長。感謝天主！



何莉莉

雖然原本十分期待的領洗聖事，由復活節延後了，日期仍有待確定，但不減我渴望領洗的心情。在疫情期間，我們不間斷地學習，加深對天主教的認識，加深理解自己的信仰，卻是因禍得福。

許佩慧

疫情爆發，我覺得天主創大地，要更珍惜。領洗日期延遲，可以更珍惜與天主拉近關係。我希望藉著領洗更靠近天主。



Gigi Szeto

雖然在疫情之下，領洗的時間一改再改，但對我而言，反而是一件好事，因為我能夠再多花些時間迎接這神聖的時刻。我八月加入慕道班大家庭，課程的安排一直十分緊湊。延期後，讓我有更多時間在領洗前了解天主，做好成為天主子女的準備，因此這延期對我來說，雖有失，但有更多得著！



呂嘉敏

開始知道領洗日子推遲，有點不開心和失望，但再仔細見到有可能是5月31日時，心情很興奮和激動。今年五旬節是5月31日，亦是我的生日，我相信天主安排是最好的，祂會賜給我最豐厚的恩寵。我非常期待領洗後，自己經歷重生。



黃嘉儀

本來是在復活節領洗的，但因為疫情的關係，暫時改為5月31日。內心是感到無助的，因為我一直很期待這次受洗而獲新的生命。我希望這個疫情盡快完結，自己很快投進天父的懷抱，成為教友。



陳頌怡、崔穎祺

天主能夠自壞事情中，衍生好的事情來。新型肺炎疫情的爆發，將我們每一個人的生活都改變了。本來每周六下午均陪同小女兒回聖安多尼堂參與主日學，但主日學的課堂早於二月暫停了。隨之，也讓我從繁忙的工作和生活中抽離，讓我有更多的時間去思考信仰和瞭解天主教的真理。學校停課，讓大女兒能夠在這段期間陪伴我到教堂，在參與慕道班的課堂中，找到天主。原本很期待聖周六復活節領洗，但一再延期，令人十分擔心。感恩得到堂區內教友的鼓勵，今年領洗的教友特別有恩寵，因著他們的忠信和耐心，能特別體會天主不知疲憊地伸手扶起跌倒的我們。我們期盼早日正式成為天主的兒女，並祈求疫情盡快結束，讓候洗的兄弟姊妹準備領受洗禮的鴻恩。



教宗復活節文告：基督——我的希望

抵拒冷漠和自私，全球團結一致

新冠疫情和武裝衝突的受害者是教宗方濟各今年在《復活節文告》中格外關心的對象。4月12日中午時分，在復活主日大禮彌撒結束之際，教宗方濟各在梵蒂岡聖伯多祿大殿發表了他本年度的《復活節文告》，並向羅馬城及全世界頒賜降福。基督復活的希望是一種感染人心的訊息，傳給每個渴望喜訊的人。「基督、我的希望、已經復活！」

親愛的弟兄姊妹們，復活節快樂！

今天，全世界都迴響著教會的宣報：「耶穌基督已復活了！」——「祂真的復活了！」

這個喜訊如同在黑夜中點燃的一道嶄新火焰：這滿佈時代性挑戰的世界，此刻受到病毒大流行的磨難，我們人類大家庭陷入嚴峻考驗的黑夜。教會的聲音在這黑夜中迴響著：「基督——我的希望，已經復活！」（復活節的繼抒詠）

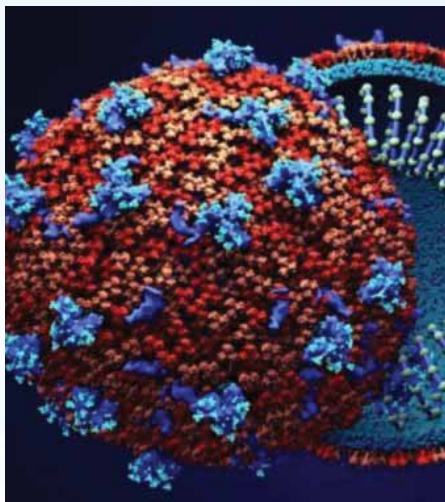
這是另一種「感染」，從人心擴散到人心，因為每一個人心都期待著這喜訊。那是希望的感染：「基督——我的希望，已經復活！」這並非是什麼神奇妙語，能使問題消失。不，基督的復活絕非如此，而是愛戰勝邪惡根基的勝利。它穿越痛苦和死亡，在深淵中開啟一條通道，且化惡為善：這是天主大能的獨特標記。

復活主就是那被釘者，不是另一位。在祂光榮的肉體上帶著不可泯滅的傷痕：創傷變成希望的縫隙。讓我們把目光轉向祂，讓祂醫治受苦人類的創傷。

今天，我特別念及直接遭受新冠病毒打擊的人們：病患、亡者，以及那些因喪失摯愛而哀悼的人們——他們中有些人甚至無法跟亡者訣別。願生命之主接納亡者進入祂的國度，恩賜仍在考驗中的人慰藉和希望，尤其是年長者和孤獨的人。願上主使身處脆弱處境中的人，如那些在療養院服務、或在軍營及監獄裡生活的人，不缺乏安慰和所需的援助。為許多人來說，這是一個孤單的復活節；從肉身的痛楚到經濟上的問題，人們都活在疫情帶來的憂苦和不安之中。

這疫症奪走的不只是情感的交流，也剝奪了眾人親自透過聖事——特別是聖體聖事及和好聖事——所能汲取的慰藉。這期間，在許多國家都無法領受這些聖事，但上主並沒有留下我們孤獨一人！在同心合一的祈禱中，我們確信祂的手將我們蔭庇（參閱：詠139:5），並向我們高聲重複說：不要害怕，「我已經復活了，而且與你同在！」（參閱：《羅馬彌撒經書》）

願耶穌，我們的逾越節，賜予各地的醫護人員力量和希望，他們透過對近人竭盡所能的照顧與關愛作出見證，甚至經常犧牲



自己的健康。

在過去幾周，上百萬人的生活突然受到改變。為許多人，留在家中提供了他們一個契機去反省、中止生活繁忙的步伐、與摯愛在一起並享受他們的陪伴。可是，為許多人這也是一個對未來不確定而擔憂的時期，面臨失業的風險，以及現今危機帶來的其他後果。我鼓勵所有肩負政治責任的人士，為

人民的福祉積極努力，提供必須的方法和工具，致使所有的人能過一個具有尊嚴的生活；並在環境許可的情形之下，使日常生活能恢復正常的運作。

現在不是冷漠的時候，因為全世界都在受苦，而世人必須要團結一致去面對這次的全球疫情。願復活的耶穌賜予希望給所有的窮人、所有的邊緣人，以及難民和無家可歸的人。願居住在世界各地城市和偏鄉的這些最弱小弟兄姊妹們不會孤獨無助。

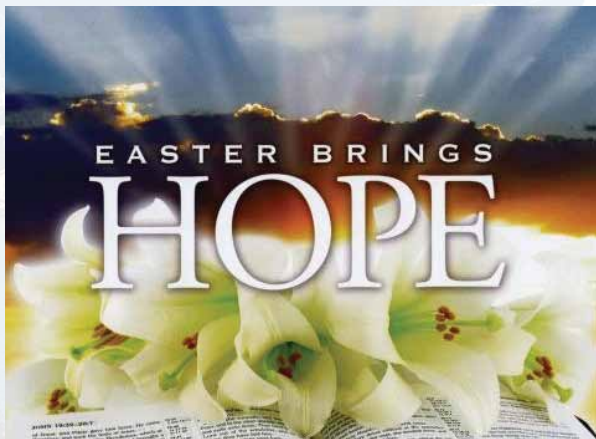
現在不是自私的時候，因為我們正在面對的挑戰凝聚我們眾人，不分彼此。在世界上遭受新型冠狀病毒打擊的許多地區，我特別想到歐洲。今天，歐盟面對一個時代性的挑戰，這不僅攸關歐盟的未來，更影響到全世界的前途。願大家不會錯過這機會來繼續證明精誠團結的精神，同時也尋找創新的解決問題辦法。

現在不是分裂的時候。願基督，我們的和平，光照衝突中所有的負責人員，好使他們有勇氣響應在全球範圍內立即停火的呼籲。現在不是繼續花費龐大資金製造和販賣武器的時候，而那些資金應是用在治療病人和搶救性命。

現在不是遺忘的時候。願我們現在面對的危機不會讓我們忘記，許多其它緊急狀況（如戰爭、旱災、饑荒、難民流離失所、政經和醫療的嚴峻局勢等）令許多人受折磨，包括亞洲、非洲、希臘、土耳其、萊斯沃斯島及委內瑞拉。

親愛的弟兄姊妹們：冷漠、自私、分裂、遺忘，真的並非是我們現在願意聽到的詞語。我們希望能永遠摒除這些詞語！主耶穌戰勝了死亡，開啟了永恆救恩的途徑，願祂驅散我們可憐人類的黑暗，並引領我們進入祂永不日落的光榮日子。

（資料：梵蒂岡新聞網）



MAY 五月 靈修生活

生活反省

耶穌說：「你們要相信我：我在父內，父也在我內；不然的話，你們至少該因那些事業而相信。」(若14:11)

我們經常口中說：「要信靠天主及聽耶穌的教誨」。但在生活行動中，卻常因顧及別人的要求或面子，而作出妥協甚或相反耶穌教導的行為，這正反映出我們在基督徒生活和信仰行為上缺乏協調和不夠堅持。

讓我們倘開心扉多讀聖經，讓聖言進入肺腑心靈，謹記主的教導，讓聖言常在自己的心中，煥發我們更新信仰、持守真理。當別人的要求相反基督徒的行為時，我們應以溫良和善的態度進行友好對話，讓世人知道我們身為基督徒必需持守真理的原則，無法接受隨波逐流的寬鬆主義。不要怕，只管信，因為透過聖經中的啟示和祂賦予的聖神，耶穌早已給了我們充沛的力量去面對俗世的挑戰。



祈禱

上主，求祢惠賜祢的恩寵並鞏固我們的信德，使我們在信仰行為上能夠堅忍地追隨祢的教誨，令我們遇到的每個人，都能因看見我們的談吐和行為而感謝讚美祢，亞孟。

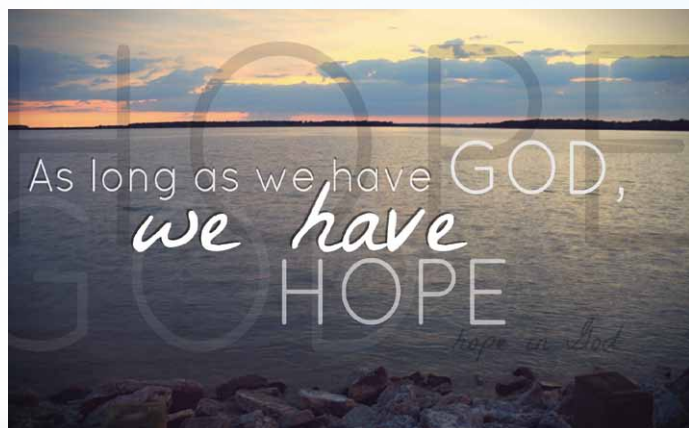


(資料：堂區培育組)

(continued from P.8)

Pope Francis' Easter Message: "Christ, my hope, has arisen!"

vulnerable of our brothers and sisters living in the cities and peripheries of every part of the world, not be abandoned.

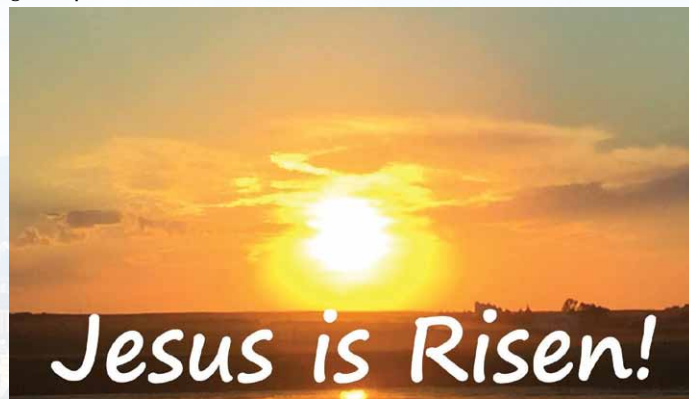


This is not a time for self-centredness, because the challenge we are facing is shared by all, without distinguishing between persons. Among the many areas of the world affected by the coronavirus, I think in a special way of Europe. The European Union is presently facing an epochal challenge, on which will depend not only its future but that of the whole world. Let us not lose the opportunity to give further proof of solidarity, also by turning to innovative solutions. The only alternative is the selfishness of particular interests and the temptation of a return to the past, at the risk of severely damaging the peaceful coexistence and development of future generations.

This is not a time for division. May Christ our peace enlighten all who have responsibility in conflicts, that they may have the courage to support the appeal for an immediate global ceasefire in all corners of the world. This is not a time for continuing to manufacture and deal in arms, spending vast amounts of money that ought to be used to care for others and save lives.

This is not a time for forgetfulness. The crisis we are facing

should not make us forget the many other crises that bring suffering to so many people. May the Lord of life be close to all those in Asia and Africa who are experiencing grave humanitarian crises, as in the Province of Cabo Delgado in the north of Mozambique. May he warm the hearts of the many refugees displaced because of wars, drought and famine. May he grant protection to migrants and refugees, many of them children, who are living in unbearable conditions, especially in Libya and on the border between Greece and Turkey. And I do not want to forget the island of Lesbos. In Venezuela, may he enable concrete and immediate solutions to be reached that can permit international assistance to a population suffering from the grave political, socio-economic and health situation.



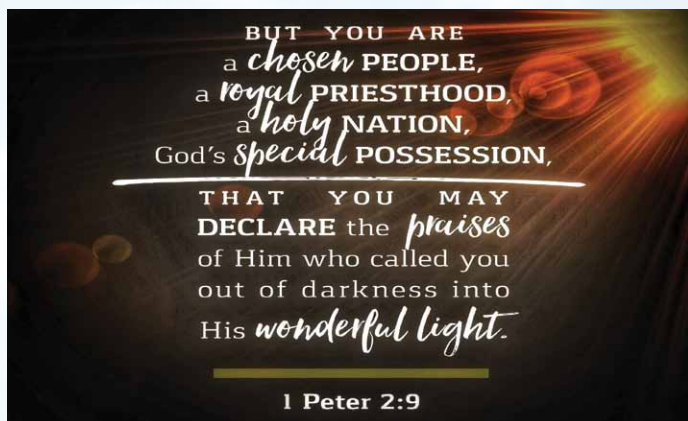
Dear brothers and sisters, indifference, self-centredness, division and forgetfulness are not words we want to hear at this time. We want to ban these words for ever! They seem to prevail when fear and death overwhelm us, that is, when we do not let the Lord Jesus triumph in our hearts and lives. May Christ, who has already defeated death and opened for us the way to eternal salvation, dispel the darkness of our suffering humanity and lead us into the light of his glorious day, a day that knows no end.

(Source: Vatican News)

Living Word of God – May 2020

07

反省祈禱



Reflection

The baptismal instruction in the first letter of Peter concentrates on how we benefit in the saving sacrifice of Christ, who gave himself up in death to free us from our sins and the power of death. Upon baptism we are crowned with four titles: "a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a consecrated nation, and a people of his own choosing."

From his citation of Isaiah 28:16 and Psalm 118:22 the author explains to us what new life through baptism is like in the metaphor of a new building for which Christ is the foundation and the important corner stone. By the power of the Holy Spirit who unites us all into one "people of God" in the church we are incorporated as building blocks of the Body of Christ; made to share in his priestly, prophetic and kingly office (LG 34-36)⁽¹⁾; and empowered to play an active part in the mission of the church.

The image of the church as 'The people of God' has become more and more popular among Catholic theologians because it affirms the common identity and equal dignity of everyone in the church. It also captures the dynamic eschatological quality of a people on a pilgrimage. The one people of God are spread throughout the world, diversified but united in one body, oriented towards the one hope of the ideal kingdom of God that is already here on earth but not yet accomplished until the eschaton.

Gaudium et Spes⁽²⁾ turns from the individual sanctification dimension of Chapter 1 into the communal sanctification dimension of human life of Chapter 2 simply because God creates people to be together to reflect the Trinitarian communion. There is no boundary in the love of God. Let us shed all our boundaries to spread the good news of God to all nations.

It pleases God to sanctify and save men not in isolation but by making them into one people of God (c.c.c. 781, LG9)⁽³⁾. The people of God are gathered together by the unity of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. Sanctification is not the same as holiness. While sanctification is initialized by God, it requires the cooperation of human and their willing acceptance in freedom to reach holiness. Hence holiness is the outcome of sanctification.

According to the Decree on the Apostolate of the Laity by Pope Paul VI⁽⁴⁾, there is a diversity of ministry in our church but only oneness in our mission. The laity share in the priestly, prophetic, and royal office of Christ in the world. We laity according to the state of our life, live in the midst of the world and understand its concerns, we are called by God to exercise our apostolate in the world.

We are consecrated to take up the royal priesthood and the holy people as in 1 Peter 2:4-10. Not only should we offer our physical and spiritual sacrifices in everything, but also, in acceptance of the charisms of prophet, priesthood and kingship through baptism and confirmation, we are sanctified and equipped to bear witness to the risen Christ through our own behaviour. These charisms give rise for each believer the right

and duty to use them in the church and in the world in the freedom of the Holy Spirit who 'breathes where He wills'. (John 3:8)

Prayers

Come down Lord the world is ill. It is ill not because of the pandemic disease but because of hatred, selfishness and mistrust sowed by their leaders to promote carping, apathy and negative spirit which turn into racism, rivalry, discrimination and competition of medical resources. Political walls and boundaries created between nations have weakened our defense against human threats. The lack of empathy, love and mercifulness distorted our vision to the truth.

Lord Jesus please heal us by removing these walls and make all nations into one people of God. Help us to realize shepherding is not about amazing and great deeds of winning over a war or ruling of a kingdom. It is about: "The lost I will seek out, the strayed I will bring back the injured I will bind up, the sick I will heal, shepherding them rightly." (Ezekiel 34:16).



Lord, please remember us in our humble prayers for the critically ill patients and the medical practitioners who have devoted not only their own professional expertise but also their own life to save these pandemic patients badly in need of help.

Let us end our prayer in a folk song called "Give me Oil" to add oil to all the nations of the world: "Give me Oil in my lamp, keep me burning. Give me Oil in my lamp, I pray. Give me Oil in my lamp, keep me burning. Keep me burning till the break of day!"

Reference:

- (1) Vatican II Document: *Lumen Gentium* #34-#36.
- (2) Vatican II Document: *Gaudium et Spes* Ch.1 & 2.
- (3) *Catechism of the Catholic Church* Veritas – Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 2994 781, also see Vatican II Document: *Lumen Gentium* #9.
- (4) Pope Paul VI Decree on the Apostolate of the Laity, November 18, 1965.

(Source: Parish Formation Group)



Holy Father's Prayer Intention for May


五月份教宗祈禱意向

For Deacons

We pray that deacons, faithful in their service to the Word and the poor, may be an invigorating symbol for the entire Church.

為執事

願執事在為聖言和窮人的服務上保持忠信，成為振奮整個教會的標記。





Shepherd Flock's Dialogue May 2020



Chancery Notice: Temporary Suspension of Public Masses

Parish arrangements:

♦ Opening Hours of the Church:

(a) 7:00am – 8:00pm **daily**

For personal prayers, visits to the Blessed Sacrament, individual spiritual exercises

[Special Intention: Containment of Coronavirus as soon as possible]

♦ Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament:

(a) 7:30 – 9:00am **Monday to Saturday**

(b) 7:00 – 8:00pm on **Thursday**

(c) **Sunday**: 8:30 – 9:30am; 10:00 – 11:00am (Chinese)

11:30am – 12:30pm (English)

* Listen to the Sunday readings and a homily;
Pray for Fighting Coronavirus;
Eucharistic Benediction

♦ Sacrament of Reconciliation:

(a) 8:00 – 8:30am on **Monday, Wednesday, Friday**

(b) 8:00 – 8:30am; 9:30 – 10:00am; 11:00 – 11:30am on **Sunday**

(c) Personal arrangements with priests

Online Mass & Services:

♦ **Daily and Sunday Masses participation** through the diocesan website www.catholic.org.hk and the Facebook link of Sunday Examiner <https://www.facebook.com/Sunday-Examiner-609821205700415/>, and receive Holy Communion spiritually.

♦ Visits to the aforementioned websites for works of penance and piety, and spiritual exercises, such as daily morning prayer, Rosary and Angelus.

Pope Francis' Easter Message: "Christ, my hope, has arisen!"



Dear brothers and sisters, Happy Easter!

Today (12 April) the Church's proclamation echoes throughout the world: "Jesus Christ is risen!" – "He is truly risen!"

Like a new flame this Good News springs up in the night: the night of a world already faced with epochal challenges and now oppressed by a pandemic severely testing our whole human family. In this night, the Church's voice rings out: "Christ, my hope, has arisen!" (Easter Sequence).

This is a different "contagion", a message transmitted from heart to heart – for every human heart awaits this Good News. It is the contagion of hope: "Christ, my hope, is risen!". This is no magic formula that makes problems vanish. No, the resurrection of Christ is not that. Instead, it is the victory of love over the root of evil, a victory that does not "by-pass" suffering and death, but passes through them, opening a path in the abyss, transforming evil into good: this is the unique hallmark of the power of God.

The Risen Lord is also the Crucified One, not someone else. In his glorious body he bears indelible wounds: wounds that have become windows of hope. Let us turn our gaze to him that he may heal the wounds of an afflicted humanity.

Today my thoughts turn in the first place to the many who have been directly affected by the coronavirus: the sick, those who have died and family members who mourn the loss of their loved ones, to whom, in some cases, they were unable even to bid a final farewell. May the Lord of life welcome the departed into his kingdom and grant comfort and hope to those still suffering, especially the elderly and those who are alone. May he never withdraw his consolation and help from those who are especially vulnerable, such as persons who work in

nursing homes, or live in barracks and prisons. For many, this is an Easter of solitude lived amid the sorrow and hardship that the pandemic is causing, from physical suffering to economic difficulties.

This disease has not only deprived us of human closeness, but also of the possibility of receiving in person the consolation that flows from the sacraments, particularly the Eucharist and Reconciliation. In many countries, it has not been possible to approach them, but the Lord has not left us alone! United in our prayer, we are convinced that he has laid his hand upon us (cf. Ps 138:5), firmly reassuring us: Do not be afraid, "I have risen and I am with you still!" (cf. Roman Missal, Entrance Antiphon, Mass of Easter Sunday).

May Jesus, our Passover, grant strength and hope to doctors and nurses, who everywhere offer a witness of care and love for our neighbours, to the point of exhaustion and not infrequently at the expense of their own health. Our gratitude and affection go to them, to all who work diligently to guarantee the essential services necessary for civil society.

In these weeks, the lives of millions of people have suddenly changed. For many, remaining at home has been an opportunity to reflect, to withdraw from the frenetic pace of life, stay with loved ones and enjoy their company. I encourage political leaders to work actively for the common good, to provide the means and resources needed to enable everyone to lead a dignified life and, when circumstances allow, to assist them in resuming their normal daily activities.

This is not a time for indifference, because the whole world is suffering and needs to be united in facing the pandemic. May the risen Jesus grant hope to all the poor, to those living on the peripheries, to refugees and the homeless. May these, the most



(continued on P.6)