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ST JOSEPH'S AND ST WILFRID'S

Weekly Newsletter During Pandemic 2020

THE MONTH OF
MAY IS DEDICATED
TO OUR LADY WHO
HAS REPEATEDLY
ASKED THAT WE
PRAY THE ROSARY

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PERHAPS DURING
THIS MONTH,
WHEN WE ARE IN
LOCKDOWN, WE
COULD COMMIT TO
SAYING A DECADE
EACH DAY ASKING
OUR MOTHER FOR
PROTECTION AND
RELIEF FROM THE
PANDEMIC

Readings for 5th Sunday of Easter (OF)

First Reading	ACTS 6: 1-7
Responsorial Psalm	Psalm 33: 1-2, 4-5,18-19
Second Reading	1 Peter 2:4-9
Alleluia	John 14:6
Gospel	John 1: 1-12

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"Don't be anxious there is room for each one of you. I'm off now to get your room ready and then I'll be back for you".

We can thank St John for recording these homely words of Jesus. His leave taking is bittersweet, on the one hand Jesus is saying goodbye to His friends who will miss Him and whom He will miss, and on the other hand He is promising that He will always be with us through His Holy Spirit and the Father's love, and He is preparing for us a place in Heaven where we will once again be happy and together.

The many rooms is not just a matter of numbers, but a complex difference of characters and temperaments and different races and creeds who belong to the Kingdom of God.

The twelve apostles themselves were a very mixed bunch:

Simon Peter was headstrong, impulsive, ready to speak without thinking

Simon was called the Zealot, a fanatic Jewish Nationalist, a fundamentalist and possibly a

former terrorist

Matthew was a tax collector, quiet and reserved, meticulous with detail

James and John were nicknamed sons of thunder probably because the brothers were easily roused to anger

and it is clear from today's Gospel that

Thomas and Philip were slow learners "Philip have I been with you all this time and still you don't know me?" "Thomas you don't yet know where I am going?"

Thank God for all these characters and especially for the slow learners and the questions they ask!

It was to this motley crew, a group of Gaililean fishermen Jesus gave His great commission "Go teach all nations, baptise them, I am with you all days until the end of time"

They were not great administrators nor Theologians, nor scientists, but they had an enthusiasm and a desire to serve, to follow the example set by the man they all loved.

All of them, with their diverse characters and talents become neverful instruments of God's.

All of them, with their diverse characters and talents became powerful instruments of God's love in this world, it was as much by their practical service to those in need as to their preaching about Jesus which attracted the rapid increase of church membership mentioned in the first reading today.

[&]quot;There are many rooms in my Father's House"

Acts of the Apostles 6:1-7 tells us how the church has become international as the Greek converts notice that their widows are losing out in the daily distribution of food to the Hebrew widows, so the Apostles co-opt seven members of the church in this ministry of service.

From the beginning of its history the church has a threefold ministry:

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The WORD - teaching and evangelising

The SACRAMENTS - celebrating the mysteries of Christ

SERVICE - helping those less fortunate than ourselves; the weak, the sick, the lonely, the elderly, prisoners

Today the Church is still the greatest provider of health care in the developing world, supported by agencies from other faiths and none, it is this ministry of service which is open to us all.

"In my Father's house there are many rooms"

Jesus is reminding us that **NO-ONE** is a **MISTAKE**, holiness and belonging to the Kingdom consists in love; the service of others: recognising our strengths and weaknesses, learning to live with the unique nature God has given us, being happy with who we are and using the talents we have in service of the community. Gad can write straight with crooked lines, He did this with the Apostles: He can do it with us too, offer Him our **weaknesses** and He will change them into **Blessings**.

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Jesus always affirmed people and encouraged them, He always made them feel good, we must do the same. Do not be afraid of your unique self, rejoice in the differences, do not long to be someone else, be yourself, God rejoices in you therefore rejoice in yourself, never be discouraged by mistakes and failings, discouragement always comes from the devil.

There are many surprises waiting for us in Our Father's house, the Kingdom of God is wider than the visible church. Never identify the church with the Kingdom of God, it is only an agent and instrument of the Kingdom. We are the **chosen people**, yes, but chosen to **SERVE** the world.

The sure and certain way to secure the room prepared for us in Heaven is to take our rightful place here on earth; to work for God's glory at home, in our places of work and in the community, in the ministry of care for others.

We are the family of God, enjoying each other's uniqueness and variety of gifts, serving one another in love and waiting for the Master's return. Our time on earth is not our true home, all the joys on earth are but a shadow of the joy to come in that room in Our Father's house:

"Eye has not seen, nor ear heard neither has it entered into the heart of man what things God has prepared for those who love Him" St Paul

Readings for the 4th Sunday after Easter (EF)

Introit	Psalm 97: 1,2
Epistle 1	James 1: 17-21
Greater Alleluia	Psalm 117: 16
Gospel	John 16: 5-14

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REFLECTION

But now I go unto him that sent me; and none of you asketh me, Whither goest thou?

The apostles, overwhelmed with the sorrowful implications of the Lord's departure for themselves, were not considering the implications of that departure for the Lord himself. Instead of rejoicing that Jesus would shortly resume his eternal glory with the Father, they thought only of their own loneliness and suffering. Understandable as their attitude was, the Saviour was sensitive to this preoccupation on their part with the implications for themselves alone. The apostles were behaving as all of us do when we lose someone we love, even though we know the person is going to be happier in their new life, we find it difficult to let go.

Jesus has already spent time trying to prepare His disciples for the day they will have to let Him go and He too is filled with a sorrow not for Himself, but for them and He tries to ease their pain by explaining more fully how His departure is necessary to make way for the next phase of their lives and how with the Holy Ghost their loss will turn to joy as He will not only comfort them but also never leave them, however the Holy Ghost can only come once Jesus has left.

We often forget how important the Holy Ghost is in our lives, turning to Him only when life becomes difficult and failing to recognise His presence with us always, rather thinking He only manifests Himself in some supernatural or miraculous way instead of showing Himself in our daily lives, we ought to be very thankful for the Holy Ghost as some have said 'Of all the gifts given to mankind by God, there is none greater than the presence of the Holy Spirit.' However, there is often much confusion about the work of the Holy Ghost, and this leads to our neglect of Him.

Like the disciples, we too are often indifferent to the presence of the Holy Ghost, perhaps because we have forgotten, or have never fully understood the importance and power of His presence within us daily. In today's Gospel we, along with the disciples are taught of the great power and importance of the Holy Ghost for each one of us.

Jesus talks of 3 important works that the Holy Spirit will do when He comes:

He Proves the Guilt of the World (vv.8-11): "When He is come He will convince the world of sin" at Pentecost, Peter stands up filled with the Spirit, "Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ" these words fill the listeners with sorrow at what they have allowed to happen, either directly, through shouting "crucify Him" or indirectly, by their silence, filled with the Holy Ghost they suddenly realise they are guilty, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do?' The Holy Ghost has given them a conscience, has convinced them of right and wrong and shown them what sin is. Throughout history we learn of many unbelievers who are suddenly convinced of sin by the Holy Spirit: St Paul; St Augustine; the many converts from pagan lives to Christianity, lives are changed when sin is made apparent and the Holy Ghost convinces the world that sin exists and He can transform our lives when we listen to His voice, ever present within us. With us too, the Holy Ghost, beside us every moment of every day reminds us of what is right and what is wrong, our conscience is pricked whenever we choose the wrong path.

He Provides Guidance for the Disciples (vv.12-13);

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When you go on holiday to a new location it is often prudent to engage the help of a guide who knows and understands the area, its cultures, laws and climate, someone who wants to show you the best of the area but also is capable of protecting you from its pitfalls, someone who wants to keep you safe and is also willing to help with luggage and easing the path which lies ahead. The Holy Ghost is better than any human guide could ever be, He dwells within us throughout our life's journey and if we are sensitive to His leading we will learn many precious lessons in every stage of our journey, we will be kept safe from harm, and in the most difficult stages of our journey He will ease our burden.

Just as our human tour guide uses words both written and spoken as well as actions to show us the way, so too does the Holy Ghost; the written Word is the Bible, which is itself a product of the Spirit's guidance. Jesus says 'I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now", Jesus is referring to all the spiritual truths which can only be fully understood under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. It was only after Pentecost, when the Holy Spirit was poured out on them that they could understand all things and teach them to the church. Why did these disciples need to be specially guided into all truth? Because they were to write the books of the New Testament. They would be inspired by the Holy Spirit to write not only what they had personally seen and heard from Jesus Christ, but also the full meaning and application of His work, His life and His mission.

The four gospels and the book of Acts were the disciples' factual accounts of what they had seen and heard both during and after the life, death, resurrection and ascension of Christ. But the explanation of what all these means is contained in the epistles or letters they wrote - beginning with the book of Romans and ending with book of Jude. These epistles contain all the spiritual truths that the Holy Spirit guided them into, as Jesus had said in v.13. He also guides and nourishes us with the written Word which He Himself inspired. But how are we responding to His work? Since we know that the Holy Ghost guides us through the Bible, do we spend sufficient time to read it, hear it, study it, meditate on it and apply it in our daily life? Not only does the Word guide us, it also offers the comfort we seek in times of trouble and heart ache, spending time reading the Bible and asking the Holy Ghost for guidance will lead us to the comfort He promised, it will also enable us to be effective witnesses for Christ. Wherever the Gospel message is proclaimed faithfully, the Holy Ghost works through it to bring sinners under conviction and to glorify Christ will be glorified by the Holy Spirit working in and through us. This brings us to the last and most important work of the Holy Spirit.

He Promotes the Glory of Christ (vv.14-15).

'He shall glorify me: for he shall receive of mine and shall shew it unto you.'

The Holy Ghost did not come to glorify Himself, but Christ. And the way that He glorifies Christ is by showing or revealing everything that belongs to Christ - everything about His person, His life, His work, His character His love and His power. In John's Gospel we discover so many amazing truths about our Lord Jesus Christ. We have seen Him as the eternal Word of God, as the Light of the world, and as the Lamb of God. We have seen that He is the Living Bread, the great 'I AM', the Good Shepherd, the True Vine, the Way, the Truth and the Life. All these speak to us of the glory of Christ, He has become real to us and we want to abide in Him. The Holy Ghost makes us see how lovely Christ is to us, so that we will desire Him and love Him above all things. He reveals to us how highly exalted Christ is - that He is now the ascended and glorified Lord of all. That makes us obey Christ and surrender all that we have to Him. These are just some of the many ways in which the Holy Ghost glorifies Our Lord and one of the most important is by changing us into the image of Christ, so that Christ can be seen in us. The more we read His Word and walk in the Spirit the more we will bear the fruit of the Spirit which makes us like our Lord Jesus Christ. We who are the Lord's disciples today can now understand why Jesus said in v.7 that it was expedient for us that He went away.

The Holy Spirit is the only One who can discern the innermost thoughts and intents of the heart and convict sinners of unbelief None of us is perfect yet, the Holy Ghost is still working in all of us at all times and we need to listen to His voice as He is the best guide we can ever have on our life's journey

Make the Month of May a Special Dedication to Our Mother, Our Lady, Mother of Our Lord, the Risen Christ

An Act of Consecration to the Blessed Virgin Mary

Holy Mary, Mother of God and Virgin, I choose thee this day for my queen, patron, and advocate, and firmly resolve and purpose never to abandon thee, never to say or do anything against thee, nor to permit that aught be done by others to dishonour thee. Receive me, then, I conjure thee, as thy perpetual servant; assist me in all my actions, and do not abandon me at the hour of my death. Amen. — St. John Berchmans

The Mysteries of the Most Holy Rosary



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Joyful

(Monday / Saturday)

- 1. The Annunciation
- 2. The Visitation
- 3. The Nativity
- 4. The Presentation
- 5. The Finding of Our Lord in the Temple

Sorrowful

(Tuesday / Friday)

- 1. The Agony in the Garden
- 2. The Scourging at the Pillar
- 3. The Crowning with Thorns
- 4. The Carrying of the Cross
- 5. The Crucifixion

Glorious

(Sunday / Wednesday)

- 1. The Resurrection
- 2. The Ascension
- 3. The Descent of the Holy Spirit
- 4. The Assumption
- 5. The Coronation

Luminous

(Thursday)

- 1. The Baptism in the Jordan
- 2. The Wedding at Cana
- 3. The Proclamation of the Kingdom
- 4. The Transfiguration
- 5. The Institution of the Eucharist

UNITING in PRAYER

It has been suggested by one of our parishioners that we join each night to pray in unity. The suggested time is 9pm, light a candle and pray during the month of May:-,

The Rosary; The Memorare and sing: 'The Lord is my Shepherd'

Please remember in your prayers all the sick of the parish and all those suffering from COVID19, their families and friends.

If you have any prayer intentions please email them to <u>shaunadevitt@tiscali.co.uk</u> for inclusion in the newsletter

Please also remember the dead especially Margaret Donnelly, relative of Shauna Devitt

Eternal Rest Grant unto Them Oh Lord

WEEKLY COLLECTION

Obviously, the Weekly Mass collections have stopped at this time, but the bills still must be paid!

Would you consider making a bank transfer from your account to your parish's account?

You could make this a one-off donation, a weekly or monthly offering until life returns to normal, or you may consider setting up a standing order to continue even after the current restrictions are lifted!

To donate via bank transfer:

Diocese of Hexham and Newcastle

Diocese of Hexham and Newcastle

Gateshead St Wilfrid's Gateshead St Joseph's

Sort Code 40-34-18 Sort Code 40-34-18

Account Number 01164120 Account Number 31164066

Please use reference: - Weekly Income

OR

Donate using a cheque made out to either parish and send to

St Wilfrid's St Joseph's

Ford House Presbytery

Sunderland Road High West Street

Gateshead NE8 3QR Gateshead NE8 1LX

Thank You to all who have continued to support the church in this way during the present situation

PLEASE REMEMBER YOU CAN FOLLOW US ON FACEBOOK

Community Support

Gateshead Council

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Have a dedicated page on their website offering a network of support to anyone who needs help, website:-

https://www.gateshead.gov.uk/article/15181/coronavirus-COVID-19-Community-support

Or phone 01914333000

Alcoholics Anonymous

Do you or someone you know have a problem with alcohol? Call free on: - 08009177650 or email help@aamail.org

Under current restrictions physical meetings of AA are not possible, they are currently being hosted on a virtual platform called "Zoom", please contact the above helpline should you wish to find out more. Locally you can contact the following in confidence: -

Paul 07554665116 Ryan 07745273686

Please don't suffer alone, there is help out there!

Pastoral Care

As part of the pastoral care of parishioners and others during this time a number of qualified counsellors and listeners have generously made themselves available to anyone who may be troubled by the negative effect of the situation. These councillors and listeners can be contacted through St Mary's Cathedral Listening Service on 01912326953

Diocesan News

Live Streaming of Masses

The following parishes have set up a live stream of Mass. Please visit the links for more details:

St. Mary's Cathedral, Newcastle

<u>Cathedral's YouTube Channel</u>. Each day at 12.00 noon (Sunday at 11.30am) Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament and devotions live streamed at 5.00pm each day.

Our Lady of Mercy Parish, Sunderland

YouTube channel. You can also find details and information on their Facebook page.

Billingham, St. Thomas of Canterbury

Facebook page, Mass daily at 12.00 noon, Exposistion at 1.00pm and Benediction at 2.00pm.

Chester le Street, St. Cuthbert and Sacriston, St. Bede

A recording of daily Mass via their Facebook Page.

Darlington, St. Augustine's

Sunday Mass at 9.15am via their Facebook page.

St. Mary's, Hexham

Via their <u>website</u> or <u>YouTube channel</u>. Sunday Mass 10.00am, weekday Mass 6.00pm and Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament Sunday 4.00pm.

St. Paul's, Cramlington Facebook Page.

Stockton Family Parish

Facebook Page.

Parish of Our Lady Star of the Sea

Facebook Page, Mass daily at 9.30am.

Diocesan Spiritual Support

These resources have been created to support you and your loved ones in this unprecedented time of the COVID-19 pandemic. We offer these prayers in solidarity and we want you know know that the Church community is praying with you and you are not alone.

'Resources for times of grieving and death' includes; Prayers for loved ones we cannot visit in hospital, Prayers for someone who has recently died and Prayers for a loved one whose funeral you cannot attend.

'Prayers for the sick and dying' contains a collection of Catholic prayers to comfort you and your loved ones during difficult times of sickness and death.

Mgr. Andrew Faley, Vicariate for Faith & Mission (email: evfaithandmission@diocesehn.org.uk).

Marriage Preparation Courses for 2020

These day courses are recommended to all engaged couples getting married in a Catholic Church. The theme is '*Relationships*' and complements the advice on the sacramental, spiritual and liturgical aspects of marriage and the logistical aspect of the wedding service provided by Diocesan clergy. Full booking details are included in the <u>poster</u>; further information required by couples or clergy can be directed to Deacon Rob Wareing, Diocesan Coordinator for Marriage and Family Life by <u>email</u>.

Vicariate for Caritas, Diocesan Pastoral Support and Outreach:

Fr. Adrian Tuckwell, Episcopal Vicar for Caritas provides a helpful summary of Pastoral Support available around the Diocese here (pdf - word).

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Destitute Asylum Seekers in dire need:

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The Covid-19 Pandemic is having a profound effect on destitute asylum seekers locally who receive no financial support or accommodation from Government. Please <u>click</u> <u>here</u> to see how you can help.

Little Sisters of the Poor Home, Newcastle:

The Little Sisters of the Poor have launched a vital fundraising appeal, in response to the increasing pressures faced by St. Joseph's Care Home during the current COVID-19 (Coronavirus) pandemic. Please follow this link to see how you can help.

Northern Cross

There are no hard copies published this month, but it can be read online for free at

northerncross.org.uk

New Names for Catholic Education Trusts

In December 2019 the Diocesan Board agreed a revised academy policy in which they identified four Multi Academy Trusts in the Diocese that would grow. These were Sacred Heart Partnership of Schools, Northern Saints Catholic Education Trust, The Trinity Catholic Multi Academy Trust, and Carmel Education Trust.

On 1 April 2020 the four Trusts were re-named as follows:

Bishop Bewick Catholic Education Trust (formerly Sacred Heart Partnership of Schools)

Bishop Chadwick Catholic Education Trust (formerly Northern Saints Catholic Education Trust)

Bishop Wilkinson Catholic Education Trust (formerly The Trinity Catholic Multi Academy Trust)

Bishop Hogarth Catholic Education Trust (formerly Carmel Education Trust)

If you know of anyone from either Parish who cannot access this newsletter via the website and would like to receive it by email, please ask them to give their email address to Fr Michael Brown or to email Shauna Devitt at

shaunadevitt@tiscali.co.uk

To whom shall we go? A Seven Session Discernment Programme for Men Considering Priesthood in Hexham & Newcastle Diocese.

Could Jesus be calling you to be Catholic Priest? Our online course of reflection and discussion is an opportunity to ask that question. Gathering as an online group, we will discuss what it means to discern a vocation, learn a little about the path to priesthood and enjoy fellowship in the process!

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The course will take place using ZOOM at 7:15pm on Mondays beginning Monday 11th May.

To express interest in joining our sessions, or to find out more, please contact Father Christopher Warren at vocations@rcdhn.org.uk

The Catholic Bishops of England and Wales recognise that this time of the COVID-19 pandemic is affecting every person in our countries. Those who are sick, and their families, are suffering many hardships of isolation from contact with those they love.

Our front-line workers in hospitals and in care homes all over our lands are giving exceptional service to those who are vulnerable at this time.

In order to show a spiritual solidarity with all those who are involved in the ways described above, each week from next Thursday, a Catholic Bishop will celebrate Mass in their Cathedral which will be live-streamed for people to join.

This will take place every Thursday at 7pm.

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Bishop Robert Byrne CO
St Mary's Cathedral, Newcastle
YouTube Channel

Diocesan Day of Prayer for the sick and their families, NHS front-line, social care workers and other key workers

On Thursday 14 May 2020 we are hosting a Diocesan Day of Prayer for the sick and their families, NHS front-line, social care workers and other key workers. The day will be streamed online via the diocesan website and begins with Divine Office from St. Mary's Cathedral at 10.00am. The day ends with Bishop Byrne celebrating Mass for the sick and their families, and for NHS front-line, social care and key workers at 7.00pm. Further information including liturgical and prayer resources will be made available on the diocesan website.

A People who Hope in Christ A Message from the Metropolitan Archbishops of the Catholic Church in England and Wales

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

The radiance of the risen Lord shines upon us. At a time when so many shadows are cast into our lives, and upon our world, the light of the resurrection shines forever to renew and restore our hope. In the words of our Holy Father, Pope

"In the midst of isolation when we are suffering from a lack of tenderness and chances to meet up, and we experience the loss of so many things, let us once again listen to the proclamation that saves us: he is risen and is living by our side . (27 March 2020)

The impact of Covid - 19, both nationally and internationally, has been immense. So much of what we take for granted has changed. Our health and physical interaction, our capacity to travel and gather, have all been affected. There is uncertainty in our future, especially with work and the country's economy.

As we know, very sadly, large numbers of people have died because of the coronavirus, and others have been or remain seriously ill. Keyworkers, not least in the National Health Service and care sectors, are serving selflessly to sustain the life of our nation. Our hearts and prayers go out to everyone who is suffering because of Covid 19, and to all those battling to overcome its effects. May those who have died rest in peace and those who are bereaved find comfort. When the Prime Minister announced the lockdown, this included places of worship and therefore, Catholic churches. These measures were put in place to stem the general transmission of the virus. It is right that the Catholic Community fulfils its role in contributing to the preservation of life and the common good of society. This must continue until the restrictions applied by the Government are lifted. None of us would want to be in the situation in which we find ourselves. While the live -streaming of the Mass and other devotions is playing an important part in maintaining the life of faith, there is no substitute for Catholics being able to physically attend and participate in the celebration of the

Mass and the other Sacraments. Our faith is expressed powerfully and beautifully though 'seeing, touching, and tasting.' We know that every bishop and every priest recognise the pain of Catholics who, at present, cannot pray in church or receive the sacraments. This weighs heavily on our hearts. We are deeply moved by the Eucharistic yearning expressed by so many members of the faithful. We thank you sincerely for your love for the Lord Jesus, present in the sacraments and supremely so in the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass. The bishops and priests of every diocese are remembering you and your loved ones at Mass each day in our churches as we pray 'in hope of health and well-being.' We thank our priests for this faithfulness to 🌃 their calling. As the Government's restrictions are relaxed step by step, we look forward to opening our churches and presuming our liturgical, spiritual, catechetical and pastoral life step by step. This will also be of service to those beyond the Catholic Church who depend on our charitable activity and outreach through which much goodness is shared by so many volunteers from our communities. None of us knows, as yet, how or when the lockdown will end. There is likely to be a phased return to travelling and gathering. As a church, we are now planning for this time and our discussions with the statutory public health agencies and Government representatives are ongoing. Together with Catholics across Figland and Wales we desire the opening of our churches and access to the sacraments. Until then, we are continuing to pray and prepare. We want to acknowledge with gratitude the service of our fellow bishops and priests, our deacons and religious, our families and lay faithful, together with all our parish and school communities, for the wonderful ways #the life of the faith is being nourished at this time, especially in the home. We also pay tribute to the Catholic organisations and networks that are working to support the vulnerable and needy. On that first Easter day the disciples were in lockdown and the doors were closed. In their isolation the Lord Jesus came among them and said, 'Peace be with you.' May the peace of the risen Lord reign in our hearts and homes as we look forward to the day, we can enter church again and gather around the altar to offer together the Sacrifice of Praise. We unite in asking the intercession of Our Blessed Lady and assure you of our prayers and blessing. Yours devotedly in Christ,

Cardinal Vincent Nichols
Archbishop of Westminster

Malcolm McMahon OP
Archbishop of Liverpool

**Bernard Longley **Archbishop of Birmingham

**George Stack Archbishop of Cardiff

AJohn Wilson Archbishop of Southwark