

Quarantine Thoughts-4

Introduction:

Churches around the world have had to cancel Sunday services because of the coronavirus. All the dioceses and parish Churches and even in the Vatican, services for Holy Week, the most sacred time of the liturgical year, will exclude the faithful.

The cancelling of church and sporting events has convinced most Australians that something significant is happening; The decision to cancel church gatherings was not easy, but it was correct. As Christians, we know that spirituality is not just about avoiding evil. It is also about doing good. Every crisis is an opportunity to do good.

Here are some suggestions about what individuals, families, neighbours & parishes can do during this time.

A) SPIRITUAL

1) We may not have church services and the Eucharist, but we still have the Scriptures. Catholics can find the daily Scripture readings at <https://www.dow.org.au/media-resources/daily-mass-readings/> Or the app UNIVERSALIS. There are also podcasts and other apps available on your smartphone.

2) Quarantine provides us with an opportunity to spend time with the Scriptures both as individuals and as a family. There are at least two ways of praying the Scriptures.

a) *First there is meditation*, in which you ask, what is the Scripture passage telling me?

What does it tell me about God? What does it tell me about how to live my life?

b) *The second is contemplation*, in which you use your imagination to put yourself into the story.

Become a participant.

Ultimately, either method should lead to prayer, which is talking with God.

3) ACTS:

Adoration praising God (God, you are awesome),

Contrition (sorry, God),

Thanksgiving (thank you, God) and

Supplication (please, God).

Many people get stuck in prayers of contrition and supplication and forget about thanksgiving and adoration.

B) CHARITY

Christians are known not only for their piety but also for their charity.

How can you perform charity in a time of social distancing?

Parishes can use email contact lists to find those who need help shopping or with other tasks especially the elderly, differently abled or otherwise at risk of infection. Parishes can become centres for networking.

But Christians do not just take care of their own; they are also called to look out for their neighbours. Every apartment building and neighbourhood is a decentralized warehouse. In kindergarten, we were taught the importance of sharing. Can we do that now? Rather than hoarding as individuals, can we as a community look out for one another?

Can we pitch in to sanitize our work environment and public spaces? For example, if you have a supply of Cleaning Stuff, use some of it to disinfect the public surfaces in your workplace or apartment *building* (doorknobs, elevator buttons, handrails, etc.).

If anyone in the house gets the virus, others will get it too. That is a risk of community life, as it is a risk of family life. Even more at risk are those in homeless shelters or on the streets.

Let's not be , in any way 'Covidiot', in this period where utmost care is required and follow the rules.

Wouldn't it be wonderful, if in our time, too, we Christians would primarily become known for the generous, selfless love of our neighbours, rather than the many things we oppose and judge?

Father Joseph