

LOCKDAY DAY 27 REFLECTION – 22 APRIL 2020

Good day dear family and friends of False Bay Diocese,

Our hymn and reading for today are both well-known favourites: *'All things bright and beautiful'* and Psalm 121.

Firstly, we pray with thanksgiving and salute our State President for the stimulus package he announced last night, with the intention of providing **social care** amidst **social distancing**. We pray for effective administration of interventions. You will find a copy of his speech on our website.

Today is the 50th celebration of **Earth Day**. There are resources on our website, including prayers and celebrating Earth Day with children. (www.falsebaydiocese.org.za). Celebrating **Earth Day** reminds us that all on **Earth** are caught up together in the pain of the Covid 19 pandemic. We also believe that the storm will pass and the Earth will bloom again. **The earth is the Lord's and all that is in it.**

The pandemic and need to stay home has slowed us all down. It has given us time to think and be kinder than we have ever been. Speak gently to people. Don't say things that cause regret later. Please continue to reach out to those for whom this shut down is a desperate crisis. It is a time to plant, to wait, to notice. For now, it is just us, the wind, the trees, the sky, the mountains, the birds ... All things bright and beautiful! It is a time for us and the earth to rest, to breathe, to recover, to heal. We have faith in God. We pray and wait for miracles. Each will emerge in his/her own way from the storm of Covid 19.

In the season of Autumn, we have lovely evenings seeing the sun drawing in. In some rural areas of our Diocese and in uninhabited places on earth, **the darkness** is thicker. Night can hold danger, especially for the vulnerable and children. As Christians, we should be afraid of **spiritual darkness**. The **darkness** which invades every part of our life – our mind, our heart, our soul, removing our compass, our sense of direction and **hope**. When one looks at night pictures of the earth from space, the northern and southern sections of **planet earth are a blaze of light**. How much more glorious is the **everlasting light** of Jesus Christ **dawning** in our lives?

Given the size of the universe, we may be tempted to wonder why God would be interested in the people of one small planet in orbit around one insignificant star (our sun) in one of the countless galaxies. Wow! But God is interested! And God is not unaware of our suffering. On this Earth Day, God assures us again that he is *the everlasting God, the Creator of the ends of the earth*.

Psalm 121 teaches us that **God will not fail us**. God is faithful night and day. God neither slumbers nor dozes off. During this lockdown, God is concerned and attentive to what is happening. God is watchful and will not relax watchfulness. The Psalmist says in vss 1 and 2 of Psalm 121 that he needs help and that he has confidence in God. In vss 3-8 the worshippers say, *"Yes, indeed you can trust God"* and give the reasons why.

Today, I encourage you in your prayer time to make a list of where God has come to your help and list the reasons why you can trust God. If you can, do some gardening. Pick up a stone, a leaf, a feather or something from nature, to keep as a reminder that God is journeying with us. Please call a **child** that you know and tell him/her that Jesus loves them and so do you.

Prayer: Besides praying Psalm 121, also pray Canticle 6 on page 346 of An APB.

I am, Because we Are, Because God is ... Opening hearts to heal God's world. Until we meet again, may God hold you in the palm of God's hand. **Amen**