

## LOCKDOWN DAY 28 REFLECTION – 23 APRIL 2020

Good day dear family and friends of False Bay Diocese,

Scripture reading: John 12:20-26. Song: *In Christ alone*

Today, in our liturgical calendar, we remember St George the Martyr. Saints and mystics use unpopular words of “suffer” and “surrender”. Read what Jesus says to us in John 12:24: *‘unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains just a single grain; but if it dies, it bears much fruit.’* This Covid 19 crisis is teaching us to let go of the extra baggage we carry. From this letting go, new and true life will come. Life that really matters. I thank the Lord on this Saints day for inspiring and giving you grace to be cheerful, patient, persevering and charitable.

Yesterday on social media and on our TV screens, we saw vivid scenes of restlessness, lawlessness, criminal elements, being played out on the R300 arterial. Please pray for the people and clergy in our Mitchells Plain and Delft Parishes and those trying to maintain law and order. We do not condone these actions. While we are all in the Covid 19 storm, we are not all in the same boat. The inequality of our backgrounds places us in different boats. We are going through a time when our perceptions and needs are completely different.

**Anger** may be a grain of wheat that needs to fall into the ground and die. In the presence of the Holy Spirit, each of us needs to look at our own built up anger. Some of what we saw on the R300 is the negative and inappropriate expression of anger. Spouses and partners who may be finding lockdown challenging, please do not let your frustration escalate into rage. Get in touch with the feelings in your bellies. We are so used to letting our minds dominate that we forget our feelings and our bodies.

The protestors on the R300 are perhaps missing the point that our State President has committed Government and by extension ourselves, to leave no one behind in the Human Rights crisis of Covid 19. Tonight, is a big night for South Africa. Respectfully, we would be delusional to think that the lockdown will be completely lifted and that our churches will reopen. The aim of the lockdown is to flatten the coronavirus curve, to curb and slow down the disease. Our government is doing the best it can and they have reacted faster than many developed countries. Please keep praying that a vaccine will be discovered. Please only leave your home to get essential items.

Jesus is telling us in our gospel reading this morning to face up to and not try to ignore the devastating effects of the coronavirus. Facing up to it, Jesus suggests, is the way to real life, in which we know our limitations and can be honest about them. To serve Jesus is to follow him in self-sacrifice.

In conclusion, we wish our Muslim neighbours and friends well in their fasting, prayer and reflection as they enter the holy month of Ramadan, in the Islamic calendar.

I invite you today to give a Muslim neighbour or friend a call to assure them of your prayers. If you know anyone who bears the name of ‘George’ or anyone who worships at a church dedicated to St George, give them a call to encourage them.

**Let us pray** the Common Collect 2 on page 319 of An Anglican Prayer Book. Pray for wisdom for our State President and that he may know that God cares and is watching over him

I am, Because we are, Because God is ... Opening hearts to heal God’s world. God bless and much love.