

LOCKDOWN DAY 89 – 23 JUNE 2020

Molweni dear family and friends of False Bay Diocese,

Scripture: Matthew 10: 32-39 Song: *There is none like You*

Do you recognize that God wants to bless you today? Covid-19, protests, brutality, racism, classism, returning to school, homelessness, hunger, Gender Based Violence are real issues and can consume us to the extent that we do not recognize that God wants to bless us today. We see the world through the printed headlines and through the people that surround us. I am inviting each one of us to choose to write a positive headline today. Let us renew our spirits. Our headlines today will collide with our worries, but we will find that they no longer hold us so tight. We will be reminded that our capacity to love is never ending.

In today's gospel reading we have a tug of war between the Cross and Resurrection. We are invited to fall **through our life situation into life itself**. During this period of lockdown, God has given us the strength and courage to carry our crosses. God is not nowhere. God is now here. God is everywhere. We are never alone. Do you recognise that God wants to bless you today? From loss, from the cross, comes renewal. As soon as we collapse into God, into who we truly are, when we fall **through our life situation into life itself**, we experience light and peace that passes all understanding. Matthew 10:39 reads *"Those who find their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for my sake will find it."*

We are asked in today's reading to **declare** ourselves before Jesus, before Our Lord. We are asked to acknowledge Jesus before others. Are we perhaps so grounded in **fear** that we are **admirers** rather than **followers** of Jesus? In essence, we are asked to **declare** ourselves **for Jesus** before the world. In return Jesus says that as we reverence Jesus, Jesus will also acknowledge us before our Father in heaven. Do you recognise that God wants to bless you today? God's Grace is greater than anything that is going on in the world.

We are encouraged in the gospel to look at family life. Jesus is not calling for an unloving attitude. Jesus is saying that families will experience conflict in the home, when some members accept Jesus and others reject following Jesus. It is true that our foes are often in our households. During lockdown some families are at home and in each others space more than usual and loved ones have in some instances become enemies. Are our families a place of love, nurture, caring for each other? Sadly, some families experience division even though from the outside they look peaceful. Family members keep silent as the consequences of speaking out are too dangerous. They are so devalued that they have lost their voice as for them keeping quiet is the safer option. In the course of the week, I will be issuing, in the three languages of our Diocese, a communication addressing Gender Based Violence. God willing, we will do a follow up in terms of culture, tradition and patriarchy. We ask ourselves today whether we are pulling down or building up family life?

Do you recognise that God wants to bless you today? We are being challenged to commit to being **followers** of Jesus rather than just **admirers**. Do you have faith **in Christ** or the faith **of Christ**? There are times when **our commitment** to Jesus is **tested to breaking point** and we may then say that we are prepared to follow Jesus **to** the cross but not **on** the cross. Let us acknowledge today that we have all made mistakes. I am inviting you to once again be re-grafted into the Trinity. Our deepest self is in God but we don't know it. We need to fall through our life situation into life itself. Love is who you are. Don't live outside of it. You are the temple of the living God. You have unbelievable dignity.

Today, please write that headline about the tenderness of Jesus and **reach out** to someone who needs to be overwhelmed by kindness to renew their spirit.

In our prayers, we meditate on Psalm 86 – there is none like you O Lord. We pray for the Church, that she may always enjoy the protection of God against every danger. We pray for the world, that the leaders may

govern those in their charge with justice, truth and love. We pray for ourselves, that we may be filled with the spirit of fortitude, to speak the truth with love and without fear. We pray for all those afraid to take a stand, that they may be emboldened and empowered by God's Spirit. We pray for students and learners, that they may reap the fruits of their hard work with success. We pray the prayers on page 90 of An Anglican Prayer Book. Through Christ our Lord. Amen

I am, Because We Are, Because God is....Opening hearts to heal God's world. *God is closer to us than we are to ourselves.*