

LOCKDOWN DAY 102 – 6 JULY 2020

Molweni dear family and friends of False Bay Diocese,

Scripture: Matthew 11:25-30

Hymn: *Be still for the presence of the Lord*

As a Diocese we have together come through 102 days of lockdown, with God's help and grace and the support of one another. God continues to bless us abundantly. We thank the team who were involved in the beautiful and moving Diocesan Service of Healing guided by our Senior Priest. The Guild of St Christopher, under the direction of Revd Leticia Villet, is distributing weekly Sunday School lessons. The Guild of Bernard Mizeki held silent protests outside their churches yesterday lamenting Gender Based Violence. Our Parish clergy continue to excel in providing us with virtual services and audio messages. To God be the Glory!

Lord make us people of stillness and fill us with your peace. Jesus knows our human nature. Jesus knows how frail we are, the worries we carry, the burdens of family life, work, no work, school, health, children. Some are in crisis because of Grades 6 and 12 returning to school today. The rapid spread of the coronavirus either brings out resourcefulness, wisdom, creativity, courage and skill in people, or the opposite. It is a health crisis on many levels, including mental health. There are so many burdens we need to bear and Jesus says '*come to me.*' Jesus says I have taken your burdens on my shoulders to the cross. Jesus did this for all humanity until the end of time and we must never forget that. Jesus invites us to receive his yoke. Jesus says that his burden is light.

In the gospel text Jesus invites all who are overburdened to come to Jesus to receive the peace that Jesus can give. Jesus is aware of our need for peace; tranquil peace in our souls. It is a beautiful text that has many dimensions, some of which you may have heard expressed yesterday by your local clergy.

In the text Jesus exclaims "*I thank you Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because you have hidden these things from the **wise and intelligent** and revealed them to infants.*" In another interpretation, it speaks of the **wise and learned**.

We ask ourselves how well disposed we are to be enlightened by Jesus? We too may be thinking and behaving as if we are self sufficient and therefore the secrets of the Kingdom of God are hidden from us. The deep secrets of the life of faith are hidden from the learned and clever and revealed to those who are childlike. We are to become childlike. Jesus knows precisely, perfectly how the human mind works. Intelligence and learning are good things, they are gifts from God. Learning is a precious right given to us by God. The fault is not with intelligence and learning in themselves but in what they can do to us. Intelligence and learning can have the unintentional effect of making us think that we are superior; we separate ourselves from others and we even undermine others. We destroy their confidence and make them feel less secure.

Infants and little children do not have the luxury of being self-sufficient. When we think we are learned and clever, we can lose sight of and reject the things that God and life is inviting us to welcome and receive into our lives. Superiority never enters a room alone. It brings with it the cousins of arrogance, pride, disdain, cynicism, boredom. The very strength that intelligence and learning bring into our lives, can give us the impression that we are self-sufficient.

The invitation of Jesus is for us to have the mindset of the child. The text *continues* "*All things have been handed over to me by my Father; and no one knows the Son except the Father, and no one knows the Father except the Son and anyone to whom the Son chooses to reveal him.*" We may think, does God then not choose or want everyone to know who God is? Jesus is saying that to know God we must become humble, we must become childlike, we must become Christlike. Are we truly humble in heart and childlike? Or are we being over-rational, proud and self sufficient to the extent that we are not well disposed to be enlightened by the revelation of Jesus? God comes to confront and comfort us. God bends down low to lift us up. Confirmation candidates will remember that I often say that the only time we look down on people is to lift them up, to restore their dignity. Learn from Jesus who has a gentle and humble heart.

God willing, I will invite us to continue to reflect on this text tomorrow.

Today, please **reach out** to any Prison Warden who you may know, particularly as we see the numbers of coronavirus infections surging in prisons.

We pray for the Church that she may find in the Lord her refuge and strength. We pray for the world, that the nations may help to carry the burdens of one another in a spirit of mutual care and concern. We pray for the sick and suffering, especially those infected with and affected by the Coronavirus, that they find their strength in God's amazing grace. We pray for those who are battered and broken by the storm of Covid-19, that they may experience the power of God's presence and peace. We pray for Prison Wardens and their families. We pray for the Minister of Basic Education, Educators, Learners and their families. God our Heavenly Parent, you know the storms that assail us. When our spirits sink, let your love lift us up. Through Christ our Lord. Amen

I am, Because We are, Because God is...Opening Hearts to Heal God's World. *Have a blessed week beloved children of God.*