

Thought for the week
The Feast of the Holy Family
27th December, 2020

Lord Jesus Christ,
our Divine Physician,

we ask you to guard and protect us
and all people from the
coronavirus and all serious illness.

For all who have died from it ,
have mercy;

For all who are ill now,
bring healing;

For all searching for a remedy,
enlighten them;

For medical caregivers, helping the sick,
strengthen and shield them;

For all working to contain the spread,
grant them success;

For those afraid,
grant peace of mind.

By your grace,
may you turn the evil of disease
into moments of consolation and hope.

We abandon ourselves into your
infinite mercy.

Amen.

By the time you read this Christmas Day has probably come and gone - amidst the anxiety and confusion as to who can be seen and included, and who can't. For many, especially without the usual New Year festivities to look forward to, a feeling of anti-climax might set in.

But the liturgical year is just getting going. The church invites us to look at things differently.

Life isn't a collection of one offs. It's a journey, full of surprises, of highs and lows, good days and bad, a sort of unfolding. A moment after the extraordinary epiphany of the baby's arrival, the story of a life begins to unfold. And with it the ravelling of relationships – from mum and dad to cattle, shepherds, kings, camels, aunts and uncles – which over time will become a whole and unique tapestry.

During Advent we waited, expectant. At Christmas we celebrated, giving and receiving gifts, enjoying the moment.

Now we must move on. The new arrival brings new challenges. No sooner has the baby been safely delivered, than the family has hard choices to make. Return home, or move south, to a place of safety, away from the rumours of an angry king, bent on infanticide.

In hard times, like the ones we are living, we become impatient with fake news. We'd rather hear it like it is. And life, including family life, can be hard; we don't always get it right. We don't always feel holy. But neither did Joseph, as he pondered how to protect his wife and child, or Mary as she struggled to care for a newborn, away from her home and family.

What made the family holy was their fidelity, to each other as well as to God; their fortitude in times of trial; their forbearance of each other's failings, and their own. Today we celebrate the messiness of life, and what it teaches us about holiness.

Tim Livesey



Prayers Please

For Margaret Allison (Mary Lewis' Mother) who died peacefully on Thursday. Mary would like to thank everyone who was praying for her,

Maddy Sharman has asked for our prayers.

Vera Bird has asked for our prayers for her Great, Great Grandson Harry

Please pray for Cecilia Fung, the mother of Fr Jojo. She has had a stroke.

Please pray for Timothy Kehoe, who is very ill.

Prayers please for Antonita's nephew Peppin who has been readmitted to hospital due to the coronavirus.

Please pray for Caroline Mikhail (daughter – in - law of Jane and Ramsay Mikhail) who suffered a stroke.

Please pray for Peter Halter's sister Jean who has macular degeneration and for Jean's great grandson Rogan who is 8 and has leukemia. Rogan continues to need our prayers. Please also pray for Peter's cousin Paul Wailen who is very ill.

Please pray for Ted Cotter (brother of Philomena) who has cancer and is undergoing chemotherapy.

Please pray for children under stress.

Please pray for the residents and staff at the two nursing homes in our parish, Abbeycrest and St Luke's.

Please pray for all victims of the Coronavirus.



Please also remember in your prayers those whose anniversaries occur at this time including;

Frederick Everett, John Halter, Kenneth de Silva, John Forbes, Danny Jenkins(sr), John Owain Lewis, Julie Welemars, Jack Oswald, Louise Coulehan, Mary Williams, Matt Kearney, Terence Vincent Anthony Fernandes, Yvonne Fernandes, Jenny (Winifred) Thompson.