

# *One Day at a Time*

Father Tim's Daily Reflections  
during the COVID-19 crisis

**Wednesday 1 April**

**Lenten weekday**

**11.30am** – After brekkie and a read of the paper (more of the same ol' Coronavirus – and, of course, Meghan and Harry as they drift off into oblivion), a young man named **Max** has arrived to set up the Segafredo coffee machine he is installing on the back veranda of the presbytery. Yesterday I had a locksmith open up the iron gate there, so now if people come to see me (on business, for confession, or just to visit) they can drive into the car park area behind the presbytery and enter through the gate directly onto the veranda without needing to enter the house. This will be safer for all, and will also get me out into the fresh air more often – and we can have a decent cuppa! I got the idea from the new coffee machine installed in the staff room at our school.

Meanwhile I'm still typing in everyone's email addresses – only three pages left from a thirteen-page printout of all the parish email addresses.

Last night I read a beautiful thought by **Fr Noel Connolly** in *The Far East*, the Columban Mission Society's magazine: *During Holy Week, we normally say, "I am no good, but You, Jesus, are so good that You forgive me." This was not Jesus' intention. Ironically, His Crucifixion was not meant to prove how good He is, but something that is much more difficult for us to accept: namely, how good we are. . . Jesus loves us because we are loveable. We are both good and bad, but predominantly good. Jesus was always trying to tell people, "I love you . . . I believe in you . . . You can be a much better person than everyone tells you that you are, and you can be better than even you think you are yourself."*

As these days of the pandemic become weeks, and even months, it will be easy for us to revert to our worst selves: impatient, demanding, selfish, whinging. We could become depressed, especially if we have little contact with others.

Look at the Crucifix, or a picture of Jesus – especially His Sacred Heart. Let Him say to you, *"I love you because you are loveable. I believe in you. You can be better – I will help you. Reach out to Me, and I will be with you to hold you, to embrace you, to comfort you."*

**6.00pm** – This afternoon, I finished typing all the parishioners' email addresses into one master list in my email account: 431 of them! Then I had my first two customers in "**Don Timo's Café**" on my veranda! ("Don" is the Italian title for a diocesan priest; "Padre" is the title for priests who belong to religious orders. Thus "Padre" Pio but "Don" Bosco. And "Timo" is the nickname (Tim) for "Timoteo" (Timothy). This is your Italian lesson for the day.)

First, **Monsignor Entwistle** came by to discuss timings and logistics for our Holy Week services. We're both being dragged kicking and screaming into the age of live streaming – I'm kicking, and he's screaming! We'll get there, I'm sure – it's just hard to change your whole mindset at our age, and to envision how we're going to conduct meaningful Holy Week ceremonies – which are rather complex and very different from ordinary Masses – without the assistance of acolytes and altar servers. It should at least be entertaining to watch!

Then, **Dr Antoinette Torre** came over to check my blood pressure. It's usually slightly elevated, but she doesn't want me to suffer a stroke in the midst of all the unusual circumstances. We also talked about the travails of home schooling four children in different grade levels, all the while the fifth child, a 3-yr-old, is demanding attention. It's challenging for many parents, I'm sure. But, as with me

and Monsignor trying to adapt our liturgical practices, I'm sure parents and students will develop a new system of operating . . . at least I hope so, or there will be some domestic violence!

After that, I prepared the **marriage notices** for the parishes where Hanna Lyra and Alex Goldrick, whom I married last Sunday, were baptised. Hanna's notice goes to St Lawrence in Balcatta, and Alex's notice goes to St Mochta in Dublin. So I'll have to visit Australia Post to send the notice to Ireland.

Now **Alessio** is coming over to discuss Holy Week liturgies, and to give me a run down on what has been going on at **Notre Dame Primary School in Cloverdale**, where he teaches music. It's interesting to hear how people in various situations are dealing with the lockdown, and to give them a bit of encouragement. Everyone is already 'over it' – but we have to mentally prepare ourselves for the fact that this is going to be our life for several months or more. Let's pray the **Memorare**: *Remember, O most gracious Virgin Mary, that never was it known that anyone who fled to thy protection or sought thy intercession was left unaided. Inspired by this confidence, I fly unto thee, O Virgin of virgins, my Mother! To thee I come, before thee I stand, sinful and sorrowful. O Mother of the Word Incarnate, despise not my petition, but in thy mercy hear and answer me. Amen.*

I didn't have any lunch, so I must prepare a decent dinner. God bless all of you!