

One Day at a Time

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

Tuesday 31 March

Lenten weekday

11.30am – Aaahhh . . . blessed peace at last! No window workers, no online streaming business, just quiet today! I had my Special K and orange juice and read the paper. It's pretty useless keeping up with the news these days – it's all about the virus.

I just sat down to work on the parishioners' email list, when I got a text from my friend who works at Coles in Inglewood: eggs are in! But only half-dozen packs – nevertheless, I'm running over to get some. I'll get back to this later.

2.20pm – I made a quick shop at **Coles in Inglewood** and bought my eggs, plus milk, margarine, potatoes, onions and tissues. I picked up four boxes, but then discovered that I could only purchase two – so I gave them to the woman behind me in the queue. She recognised me from a funeral I performed for a friend of hers, and she was very glad to get the tissues (which I need for the house, office and church). She said, "Even you can't get more than two boxes of tissues?" My friend **Paul**, the cashier, smiled as I said, "No, no special treatment for me – I don't want Paul to get the sack!"

I also saw one of our St Paul's School students from years ago, **David Watts**, who recognised me (I didn't recognise him). He said, "Father Tim!" I looked at him a bit blankly, and asked, "What's your name?" He answered, "David." I responded, "David what?" He beamed and said, "You remembered! Yes, David Watts!" I saw him a couple more times as I shopped, and again as I was leaving – each time he beamed, and as I left, I overheard him say to the person behind him in the queue, "That's Father Tim, my priest from St Paul's – he has a very good memory: he remembered my name after all these years!" Hahahahaha!

I posted two letters and then dropped by the school. All the staff there are so good to me, always welcoming me and taking care of me: "Have a coffee . . . can I make you a sandwich? . . . have some nice biscuits . . ." And **Yvonne Liebeck**, our principal, had prepared a 'care package' with various tinned foods, instant soups and noodles . . . and two boxes of tissues! See, God is good – all the time!

8.15pm – I spent a few hours this afternoon entering parishioners' email addresses into my contacts list; the list is 13.5 pages long, and I have 3 pages left to go – hurray! Then I'll be able to send emails to everyone to alert them to what's happening in the parish: our Mass streaming times, Holy Week services, bible study, RCIA & catechism sessions, etc.

I offered Mass at 6.15pm in church; **Alessio** and **Damien** attended (all at social distance, of course). The First Reading was about **the Israelites grumbling in the desert** – they were tired of the food God had sent them (bread from Heaven, quail to roast, water from the rock). When they were slaves in Egypt they rarely had meat at all, and now they had quail every day (good protein!). I compared them to the people holed up in the **Duxton Hotel** at taxpayers' expense who are **complaining about the food**, not being able to open the windows, etc. I said that **Anne Frank's** family was confined to an attic in Amsterdam for two years during World War II; these people who came off the cruise ships or international flights have only two weeks to endure, and it's in a 5-star hotel, for goodness' sake! Chill out: eat your three meals per day, watch TV, use your free internet, and thank God that you're alive and well, you snowflakes!

Alessio and I went to get a takeaway coffee (well, I had peach iced tea) and came back to the presbytery to discuss what we'll do for **Holy Week services**. We're both looking forward to streaming our liturgies, and we hope you'll enjoy them. Now I'm off to have dinner: lasagne! God bless.