



St Leonard's Church
cnr Strickland & Mitchell Sts
Denmark

Anglican Parish of Denmark-Walpole

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St. George's Church
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Walpole

Parish Priest: Revd Sally Buckley tssf 9848 2173
Wardens: Alison Kershaw 9848 2606, Sally Prickett 0428 747 262. Judy Ross 0455 509 317
Treasurer: Chris Prickett 0413 103 743

We endeavour to be an expression of God's love in the community

Thursday, March 26, 2020.

Dear Parishioners,

How much changes in a week! They say it is a long time in politics, it is even longer under the wretched Coronavirus!

As you will, no doubt, have caught up by now, after announcements by both the Prime Minister and Premier of WA, on Tuesday I made the difficult decision to close the church doors, both at St Leonard's Denmark and St George's Walpole.

As you know, it was my intention to have the door of the church open between 9.30 am and 4 pm each day. Unfortunately, that was not possible under the new regulations.

While we might rant and rail against this, while the church is our 'sacred space', God is not only in the building we love. I would encourage you all to make a 'sacred space' somewhere in your own home or garden, if you do not already have one. A place you can be quiet and pray or read, a place where you can intentionally encounter God.

For those of you online, please regularly check out the parish website for information. For those who are not on email, every Friday there will be a 'mail drop' for Denmark parishioners, on a table in the porch of St Leonard's church. For Walpole residents who are not on email, please contact Harold Luxton for a copy of everything I am sending out.

Please, everyone, make sure we have your up-to-date contact details correct.

During this period, we are endeavouring to stay in touch weekly with you all at the least amount of costs, particularly considering our income will be very low for the duration.

On the subject of income, I again encourage you, if you haven't already, to set up an online Direct debit offertory. When you do, can you please mark your deposit as 'Offertory' – this will help the Treasurer.

For those for whom this is not an option, our idea of posting it in the slot in the church is also no longer an option, can we ask you to mail your offertory to our postal address: PO Box 277, Denmark 6333. Many thanks.

This week I have created and service booklet, with two options for Morning and Evening Prayer and a service of 'Night Prayer' or Compline. If you are unable to print it, please let me know and we can make sure you have a printed copy of the booklet, otherwise the five services will be available, separately, on the website.

On a personal level, it has been lovely, this week, to have my husband Chris with me, from Esperance. He will stay until it is safe for him to go back. During the week we have been talking with family in the United Kingdom and New Zealand. If you think our restrictions are difficult, we have a long way to go yet, with 'self-isolation' being virtual 'lockdown' in both countries.

I said in last week's sermon, that this, for us will probably be the most profound Lent that we will experience. We can use this time to get anxious and angry, or we can be sensible, follow what and how we are told to conduct ourselves, think of others and trust in God to see us through this. Above

all, we can use this time to be still, to rest and to experience the profound love of God; as the saying goes, 'stop and smell the roses'!

Last Sunday morning, a friend shared with me a lovely reflection called *Lockdown* written by Fr. Richard Hendrick OFM Cap., a Franciscan Capuchin Friar, living in Ireland.

Yes there is fear.

Yes there is isolation.

Yes there is panic buying.

Yes there is sickness

Yes there is even death.

But,

They say that in Wuhan after so many years of noise you can hear the birds again.

They say that after just a few weeks of quiet the sky is no longer thick with fumes but blue and grey and clear.

They say that in the streets of Assisi people are singing to each other across the empty squares, keeping their windows open so that those who are alone may hear the sounds of family around them.

They say that a hotel in the West of Ireland is offering free meals and delivery to the housebound.

Today a young woman I know is busy spreading fliers with her number through the neighbourhood

So that elders may have someone to call on.

Today Churches, Synagogues, Mosques and Temples are preparing to welcome and shelter the homeless, the sick, the weary

All over the world people are slowing down and reflecting

All over the world people are looking at their neighbours in a new way

All over the world people are waking up to a new reality

To how big we really are.

To how little control we really have.

To what really matters.

To Love.

So we pray and we remember that

Yes there is fear.

But there does not have to be hate.

Yes there is isolation.

But there does not have to be loneliness.

Yes there is panic buying.

But there does not have to be meanness.

Yes there is sickness.

But there does not have to be disease of the soul.

Yes there is even death.

But there can always be a rebirth of love.

Wake to the choice you make as to how to live now.

Today, breathe.

Listen, behind the factory noises of your panic

The birds are singing again

The sky is clearing,

Spring is coming,

And we are always encompassed by Love.

Open the windows of your soul

And though you may not be able
to touch across the empty square,

Sing.

Please be assured of my ongoing prayers and if you need someone to talk to, something delivered to you because you can't get out, please let me know.

Your priest and, I hope, your friend,

