



The Redemptorist Community
St Mary's Monastery, Clapham
SW4 7AP

From the desk of the Acting Provincial Superior

Dear Confreres, Lay Associates and all our friends,

Since I last wrote to you things have changed significantly and we are now in 'lockdown'. At this time I think it necessary to still ourselves and enter into the silence and the calm that is all around us. Bear in mind I am writing this from my desk here in London, with my window open, the sun streaming in and the sound of birds filling the air. No longer are the planes flying over every fifty seconds. For the time being our world has changed, so let us embrace it as it is and be sure to recognise the presence of God. May I offer a few lines from Pope Francis' meditation when he addressed the empty St Peter's square, with many of us following every word on television or social media.

The Lord awakens so as to reawaken and revive our Easter faith.

We have an anchor: by his cross we have been saved.

We have a rudder: by his cross we have been redeemed.

We have a hope: by his cross we have been healed and embraced so that nothing and no one can separate us from his redeeming love.

...let us once again listen to the proclamation that saves us:

he is risen and is living by our side.

Pope Francis 27th March 2020

Final Vows

I am pleased to tell you that the OPC met recently to discuss the requests of Br Mike Taylor CSsR and Br Royston Price CSsR made in connection with professing Perpetual Vows; the OPC voted in their favour. At this stage there are no dates set, however that information will be passed round as soon as things are organised. For the time being let us rejoice in our brothers' dedication and their confidence in vowing into the future, whatever the Redeemer has in store. Br Mike and Br Royston, we say to you, *Vivant in aeternum!*

Kinnoull

As I wrote in the middle of March, you are all aware that Kinnoull Monastery is now closed as a result of COVID-19 and will remain so until the end of June. Please God we will be in a better position to make positive plans for the future. The Community are all well and continuing with a very contemplative monastic life.

Liverpool

The Community in Bishop Eton Monastery are on the whole quite well and living in harmony with one another and I have heard gratitude for the quality of the preaching at the daily community masses.

Fr Timothy Buckley has been doing sterling work through getting the Mass out there through social media and this has been greatly appreciated by the people of Bishop Eton and St Marys, Woolton.

There are two confreres in the community who are not so well and are in need of prayer:

Fr Tony Johnson CSsR

For some time now Fr Tony has been in hospital. At the moment plans are being drawn up to move him from the hospital into Christopher Grange Residential Care Home, not far from Childwall. Please keep Fr Tony in your prayers as he gets accustomed to his new surroundings.

Fr Gabriel Maguire CSsR

Fr Gabby would really appreciate our prayers, he is currently going into hospital as I type. Due to the 'lockdown' in Christopher Grange, where Fr Gabby has been recently, it has been virtually impossible for the community to visit him this last while. Fr Timothy Buckley was able to go in very recently to pray with Fr Gabby and anoint him.

During this sacred time that we are about to enter into let us pray for one another, especially those who are sick.

Clapham

We are without one of our members as Fr Peter Morris moved to Kinnoull in order that he might recuperate better. That aside everyone else in the monastery is in fine form. The cooking has been taken over by Fr Maurice and Br Royston, so the community is eating very well.

In the deanery we have been hit quite substantially with Coronavirus. In one religious community two of the members had the virus, but thanks be to God have recovered. In another parish three of the clergy had to self-isolate when a parishioner called to say her husband was infected, they then found out that she was also infected. We have one priest currently in hospital with the coronavirus

and this is all within our deanery. Let us pray for all who are suffering due to this virus.

Despite the situation the parish fathers are still able to get the daily Eucharist out to the people via social media, added to this is the "Thought for the Day" which has been undertaken by the community at large.

Birmingham

Fr Elias Gweme and Fr Frank Dickinson are coping very well at the moment and are holding us in their prayers. Fr Kieran Brady is currently in St James' Paisley, where he recently did a parish mission. He promises us that he will be praying for us throughout Holy Week and beyond. We pray that Fr Kieran will be able to re-join his community once the virus is under control.

Redemptorist Publications

In response to all public Masses being postponed, RP are able to bring the Sunday Mass into people's homes, celebrated by Fr Denis McBride CSsR, every Sunday. You can find the link to the 'Holy Mass Online' on the RP website. They are also providing lots of good resources free of charge; the Stations of the Cross are free online until Easter Sunday, and there are several excellent talks given by Fr Denis. Some of these talks can be found on our Redemptorist website and rpbooks.co.uk.

Zimbabwe

They are now in a similar position to ourselves in as far as the country is under lockdown and this will remain so for three weeks at the moment. In our communities they seem to be all fine and are being good at staying at home. However it is not easy for everyone. One of the confreres sent me some photos of the police confiscating more than a tonne of vegetables from a farmer and then burning all this stock. Life is still very tough, please keep the situation in Zimbabwe to the forefront of your prayers.

Nonetheless life carries on and the communities give a wonderful service to those who are in need. We pray especially for our Redemptorist students and our four novices, two are from Zimbabwe and another two from Kenya. We remember them all.

Vocations Promotion

At the recent meetings of the OPC it was decided that Br Royston Price CSsR should take on the role of Vocations Coordinator. This will mean that he will be working with the other confreres involved in this ministry however he will have a more focused and dedicated ministry in this apostolate. Please pray for Vocations.

Lay Associates

I am very conscious during this time of lockdown that we have a good number of lay associates who are not able to have contact with us. This certainly does not mean that our lay associates are forgotten. We hold our lay associates before the

Lord when we pray for our confreres and our mission, we realise that we are all in this together and the Lord will continue to bond us all together. So, lay associates, know that you certainly are not on your own!

St Mary's Monastery, SW4

One more piece of good news, we received the permission from Lambeth Council to go ahead and do all the proposed renovations on the Clapham monastery. This permission was with the council for an extraordinary long time and we began to fear whether we would have any success or not. Some of the community were praying to the Venerable Bernard Łubienski CSsR, asking for his powerful help! For the moment we must wait until our friend, coronavirus, passes us by.

It is really great to see the Church so powerfully represented on social media in these days of 'crisis' and all the more wonderful seeing our CSsR family throughout the world doing their bit on line. We can proudly be Redemptorists!

As you will appreciate I am in touch with Fr Ronnie McAinsh, and he is still dealing with health issues and at this moment his cardiologist is unwell, so prayers please.

My prayer for all of us is that we will be spiritually enriched in these most sacred days that lie ahead. May we all truly know this Saturday night that...

"he is risen and is living by our side".

May the blessings and peace of our Most Holy Redeemer
be ours this Eastertide.

Peace,

Fr. Richard Reid CSsR

Fr Richard Reid CSsR
A Provincial Superior

8/iv/2020

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