



### Chaplain's Message No. 5

Greetings Everyone,

Together with my audio message for this Sunday - the Fifth in Lent – I'm offering a few extra thoughts here to stimulate your thinking during these challenging days.

St Edward's has now been closed for three weeks and no one can say with any certainty when we will be allowed to reopen. It could be a few more weeks, but maybe not even until May! We just don't know. We all need to be patient and ride out this situation together and stay united.

I am very much aware that many of you are beginning to really miss not being able to receive holy communion. There is a feeling of emptiness in your spiritual life, that something precious has suddenly gone. I totally get that and feel much the same way myself. So, what to do?

Below you will find **An Act of Spiritual Communion** which I hope will go some way to help fill the void by not being able to attend Mass. It is pretty much self-explanatory and has been used in a number of chaplaincies in our diocese in recent days. I commend it to you.

You will also see a splendid prayer penned by the vicar of St Martin-in-the-Fields in London, the Revd Dr Sam Wells. It's another one to add to your expanding collection of invaluable material to use at home during the lockdown.

That's all for now, except to say, do try to find time to tune in to my latest audio homily. It's a bit shorter than last week's, so no excuses! 😊

Go well, stay safe, and as always, I send all good wishes and many blessings,

Fr Nigel S D Gibson  
Lugano

29/03/20

## **AN ACT OF SPIRITUAL COMMUNION**

When circumstances are such that we cannot share in the Eucharist in person, we can still make an Act of Spiritual Communion, in which we express our faith in Christ and in his Presence in the Eucharist, and we ask him to unite himself with us.

The basic elements of an Act of Spiritual Communion are an Act of Faith; an Act of Love; a desire to receive Christ; and an invitation to him to come into your heart.

The following text presents a modern translation of a popular form of an Act of Spiritual Communion written by St. Alphonsus de Liguori. You can memorize it or use it as a guide to offering your own Act of Spiritual Communion in your own words.

**'My Jesus, I believe that you are present in the most Holy Sacrament. I love you above all things, and I desire to receive you into my soul. Since I cannot at this moment receive you sacramentally, come at least spiritually into my heart. I embrace you as if you were already there and unite myself wholly to you. Never permit me to be separated from you. Amen.'**

### **A Prayer in the Midst of Crisis**

God of searching and knowing,  
your people Israel faced famine and wilderness,  
and your church has known persecution and hardship.

Be close to all your children in this time of bewilderment and fear.

Make this time of cessation and isolation  
one in which your Spirit reveals new ways to be together,  
fresh discoveries in worship, different gestures of care,  
and innovative forms of compassion.

Encourage the vulnerable, comfort the impoverished,  
inspire the anxious and give wisdom to those who govern.

Lift up our hearts that we may see  
the abundance of what is still beautiful and true,  
not be captivated by what is lost and absent,  
and find new gifts in ourselves and one another.

In the power of the Spirit and in union with Christ,  
who knew what it meant to be alone. Amen.

End.