

Fr Godric's Homily at the Mass for those Recently Bereaved
In the parishes of St Anne's and St Elizabeth's
07 November 2020

My Dear Friends

When we gather every year around this time I know that we find comfort from being with others, who know what we are going through in our time of grief, even if we don't know now that we are all in the same boat. This year, however, even the comfort of sharing our situation has been taken from us by microscopic particles floating invisibly through the air. We feel doubly helpless. We share a common background of having lost someone whose presence and love for us have enriched our lives, and now the coronavirus. This is where we are; it may well be that we can only think of ourselves and how difficult life is. Don't worry – it is very human to think like this. Grieving is part of the human condition.

But this doesn't mean that we have to stay alone at the bottom of the pit! Because of Jesus living as one of us, in our hearts we know that there is always a way forward; we never walk alone. We just have to look at the opening of the Gospels where we see Jesus at the outset of his public ministry in the midst of people, 'curing all kinds of disease and illness among people' (Mt 4:23). That's the story of Jesus, always there, beckoning them and us, saying, 'Follow me!' When people are living in darkness, he leads them into light and enables them to live again. In the 'Beatitudes' Jesus recognizes that those who mourn have entered a deeper level of human existence and blessed are they for having known that experience because they are able to be more understanding and compassionate to others.

As for those who have come to the end of their lives on earth – well, the Scripture readings for today's Mass remind us where we really belong: we are citizens of heaven, that's our true homeland and Jesus is waiting there to welcome us into God's heavenly kingdom. We hear this wonderful message of reassurance every time we gather to celebrate Mass. We are inspired by listening to the Word of God and by being nourished with the body and blood of Christ. Sadly, with the current restrictions we cannot be the recipients of Jesus sacramental presence but we can welcome Jesus into our hearts through prayer. The Lord is always with us.

Four times during the Mass the priest says to the congregation, 'The Lord be with you' – just in case we didn't hear it the first time! Yes, the Lord is truly risen and is with us in our moments of darkness as well as when we know that the light shines on us.

IF you ever feel it would be helpful to talk to one of the clergy please never hesitate to contact us. We can still talk on the phone.