

Reflection – April 19, 2020

It is difficult to believe that it has been that long since we were able to be together.

We missed being together for the last weeks of Lent.

We missed being together for Easter.

And, now, in the week after Easter we are still apart – essentially behind closed doors.

What an opportunity for us to reflect on the Gospel.

The first story after Easter is of the disciples who had scurried behind closed – and locked – doors for fear. They were afraid of persecution because of their association with Jesus who had been crucified.

And now all of us are behind our own closed doors for fear of the COVID-19 virus. We do not want to get sick, and if, by chance, we are accidentally carrying the virus, we do not want to make others sick.

And so our doors are closed.

The disciples had their closed-door fear transformed by Jesus – in their midst. Jesus who had been raised from the grave. Jesus was alive!

Jesus was in their midst and who offered them hope and a blessing as he breathed on them and gave them the gift of the Holy Spirit.

They were all there, except for Thomas. Was he the one elected to go for groceries? Was he the one entrusted with taking care of the others? We do not know.

What we do know is that he did not believe the story, the good news, the hopefulness that had filled with others in his absence.

And a week later, Jesus appears again. He seems to know all of Thomas's fear and hesitation. He offers him the gift of love.

And, that gift of love opens the doors of the hearts of the disciples, and in time, it will open the doors of their homes as they begin to go out, to share the good news, to share the Gospel, to share the gift of hope and love that the resurrection of Jesus means.

Likely it is time that will open the doors of our homes. Likely we will live in this virus affected solitude until we are told that things are safe – or at least safer – for us to venture out. And then we will joyfully open our doors again

But what about opening the doors of our hearts? Will they stay closed with fear? Will we let love open them?

Can we see Christ in our midst?

'Whenever you have done these things to the least of these, my brothers and sisters, you did it to me?'

Can we see Christ in ourselves? As beloved children of God?

Can we feel the breath of the Holy Spirit being given to us?

And if we can, let's be ready to reach out to others – as the doors open! Let's be ready to be re-energized with love for others. Let's take the lessons that we are learning in this time of physical distancing and keep on reaching out and caring for others.

Let's remember how important it is to reach out to those who are alone.

Let's remember how important it is to greet others with caring.

Let's let our faith show more than any fear. For indeed, God's love is stronger than any fear.