

One Day at a Time

Father Tim's Daily Reflections
during the COVID-19 crisis

Friday 20 March

9.00am - I offered Mass at the RSL, mainly to speak to any residents there who weren't aware of the suspension of public Masses in the Archdiocese. There were 12 present – just like at the Last Supper! Everyone was very understanding and cooperative, although I'm concerned about several residents who live alone. I'll have to remind our St Paul's Community Care volunteers to check on them.

10.15am – Antoinette Torre, her little boy Christian and I arrived at the Rivervale abortion clinic to join others in prayer for the 40 Days for Life campaign. I've been doing this every year for a number of years now, and it's so inspiring for me to see these women and men who give time – some of them for a number of days – to read scripture, pray, sing and encourage one another. And they're always so happy to have a priest amongst them. Our parishioner Tina Jack was also there; she is dedicated to pro-life work, and goes to many of our high schools to speak to young people about life issues. Antoinette and her husband Luke are both medical doctors, and have given me invaluable guidance and support in determining how best to minister to the parish during this pandemic. Luke is in the thick of it, being an Intensive Care specialist at Sir Charles Gardiner Hospital and on the team that attended the very first two virus victims in WA.

12.00noon – Fr Brian Limbourn arrived and I took him out for lunch at Ischia on Beaufort Street. We had a good chat about a number of topics in the Church and the world. Fr Brian is another one who lives alone, so I encouraged him to stay in touch, and invited him to concelebrate for our Holy Week liturgies (such as they may be), for which he was grateful. And the people at Ischia were grateful to see us as well – restaurants and cafés will struggle as time goes on.

2.35pm – I was back in the office talking to one of our priests about how to deal with the present situation, when I suddenly realised that I had missed my 1.45pm appointment with my GP! I think I was just getting some test results, because I had seen him last week and all seemed well except for having these regular blood tests. If the results were bad, I'm sure he would have told me (or I'd be dead!). I'll ring his office next week and see if I should come in.

5.30pm – I had been in church praying for a bit, when some parishioners came in, so I led them in a quick Stations of the Cross. We just sat in our pews and read the prayers of a short form of the Stations. One week ago the church was full for Mass, Stations and Benediction. Sigh . . .

6.30pm – Alessio and I went to Siderno's on Main Street for dinner. There were only four other people eating there, plus a few take-away orders. Very quiet! The staff were happy to see us, and I had a quick chat with a man who came in to eat alone. He owns a barber shop in the city – I may go to see him for a haircut next week, because he – like so many other small business owners – will need some business. Plus he was very interested in speaking with me, so you never know . . .