

4th April 2020

This comes to you this morning in the hope that you remain well and in good spirits.

One of the things that regularly happens at the Ascension with All Saints at this time of year, is the general sense of not knowing what's happening. This is the time when Altar Servers and Priests alike, when it comes to the triduum, get a bit jittery about 'what did we do last year?' The Triduum is the period covering the great three days leading to Easter, beginning on Maundy Thursday evening, through Good Friday to Holy Saturday.

One of the problems we have (and I suspect other parishes too), is that because we only keep these holy days once a year we easily forget what we did last time. Not the general flow or meaning of the services, of course, but the little innovations and improvements we may have made, that made the service a better experience of worship for the congregation. You see, it's easy for the Clergy and serving team to 'get in the way' of worship sometimes, to be so fussy and showy that they actually end up detracting from the worship, instead of enhancing it for the benefit of the people.

So you see, 'what did we do last year?' takes on considerable significance for those who are involved in the work of the Sanctuary. This is not to say that we are always po-faced and deadly serious about it, in fact it's often a cause for laughter as we tease each other about our failing memories. The main thing we laugh about is the fact that every year we say "I must write this down so we remember for next year", then promptly forget to do so!

Oh well, not a problem this year! This year it's up to parish priests to think imaginatively and inventively about how to make Holy Week and Easter work, in the dining room/livingroom/study, without losing the sense of awe, wonder and holiness of these great services. So, no pressure there then.

When this current situation is over, spare a thought for your frazzled parish priest and the Altar Servers as they try to remember what's 'normal' on a Sunday and deliver the service you and the Lord deserve and if they make a mess, laugh with them and just be grateful that we may enjoy those mistakes together again.

and finally...At a school Nativity play, three six year olds were cast as the Kings. Presenting their gifts to Jesus at the stable, the first said "Gold", the second: "Myrrh and the third: "Frank sent this".

Tom.

Sent by Canon Tom Page
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