



St John's Cathedral 聖公會聖約翰座堂

Anglican Diocese of Hong Kong Island
Hong Kong Sheng Kung Hui

Message of Hope: Time for us to rebuild and renew our relationships

4th May 2020

The Very Revd Matthias Der, Dean

Peace be with you! I am Matthias Der, the Dean of St John's Cathedral here in Hong Kong. Thank you for joining us at this feature Message of Hope, which is offered by the cathedral clergy during this time of COVID-19.

For the past 3 months, it has been a very trying time for all of us. Many people have got sick. Many have died. Many people have suffered terribly economically. We pray for them and pray that God's protection will be upon all of us and that the virus will be contained very soon.

Many people find this kind of lockdown very difficult. We find it staying home for a long period of time has been challenging. And people's relationships with each other have been greatly tested. Some parents found it difficult to occupy their children, with things that they will enjoy. Many couples have found it difficult as they are not used to spending so much time together. This is indeed a time of testing for all of us.

Family is important. Family is God's gracious gift for us. During this time of lockdown, what have we discovered about our family? What have we discovered about our loved ones? We may have found that they have aged more than we realized. We may realize that our children have grown up more than we have noticed. How do we deal with this adjustment?

This is indeed a time of learning and a time of adjustment for us. In any kind of adjustment we always need to have a sense of open-mindedness, patience and perseverance. With a positive outlook then we will yield positive result.

Many years ago, somewhere in Europe, the main television transmitter centre was damaged by fire. For the whole week, all the television programmes were put on a halt. Those were the days before Internet. And people found it very restless and very frustrating. They didn't know what to do with the extra time at hand. Few days later, people began to see changes in families. People began to go out for a stroll after dinner. Parents began to read stories to the children. A positive outcome has come out of this incident.

I think with all the lockdown that we have, God has actually given us a rare opportunity for us to rebuild and renew our relationships with our loved ones. Maybe this is the time that we really should spend

more time getting to know each other again. Maybe by playing board games, by cooking together, by watching television or watching movie together and share about what is happening in our lives, that we can really care for each other and support our loved ones.

The Bible says "Rejoice with those who rejoice. Weep with those who weep." (*Romans 12:15*) Yes, we should do that to everyone that we meet but especially at homes with our loved ones.

My brothers and sisters, family is God's gift to us. So often it is because of the encouragement, support and love that we can persevere through hard times. This is the time that we need our family. This is also the time that our family needs us. This is the time we should care for them, love them, support them and be patient with them. Keep up your good hope in Christ. Jesus Christ is risen. Jesus Christ is Lord. God bless you all. Amen.