



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: What have we gained from this time apart?

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Good news! The end is in sight. There is light at the end of the tunnel. The government announcement last week relaxing some of the social distancing rules in Hong Kong, and re-opening schools progressively from 27th May give us hope that we will soon be able to reopen our churches for public worship.

It's easy to focus on what we have lost in these past 3 months of closed churches. Holy Communion, receiving Christ in bread and wine taken, blessed, broken and given, has been denied to the congregations. The opportunity to meet in person with friends, the fellowship that helps bind us together as community, has been lost. True, our churches have all been broadcasting Sunday services, and you may well have been an observer, and enjoyed watching online. But everyone knows that watching sport or a concert or any event on screen is not the same as being there.

Then what have we learnt?

What have we gained from this time apart?

I hope we have learnt the value of worshipping together. I hope we have gained a greater sense of the value of community. Some people think that Christianity is just about me and God. So long as I'm alright with God, that's what matters. But Christianity is not just about me and God: it's about me, God, and other people. We are the body of Christ, and we worship together, not apart. If we try to live the gospel, our lives will be marked by love, joy, compassion, and forgiveness. That's not possible on your own; self-love is sterile, it gives nothing. Love, compassion, forgiveness, are only possible in community, in communion, in relationship with others; joy is to be shared, not kept to oneself. If we learn one thing from the life of Jesus and the stories he told, it is the deep value of relationships. I trust that this time of being apart has sharpened our focus on the value of being together.