My Dear Parishioners,

*“God loved us with so much love that he was generous with his mercy: when we were dead through our sins, he brought us to life with Christ – it is through grace that you have been saved – and raised us up with him and gave us a place with him in heaven, in Christ Jesus. This was to show for all ages to come, through his goodness towards us in Christ Jesus, how infinitely rich he is in grace. Because it is by grace that you have been saved, through faith; not by anything of your own, but by a gift from God; not by anything that you have done, so that nobody can claim the credit. We are God’s work of art, created in Christ Jesus to live the good life as from the beginning he had meant us to live it.”*

These words from the Apostle Paul’s letter to the people of Ephesus, (the second reading from Sunday’s Liturgy of the Word) are also most relevant for us today. The love of God is boundless and as we come closer to the celebration of Easter this year may we all have the opportunity to reflect upon this loving merciful action of our God who came and sacrificed his life for each one of us. As I’ve often said, as parents know so well, their love for their children is boundless also, which also means they are always prepared to sacrifice themselves for their children.

This simply means that we have life through the sacrifice of others. Imagine if my parents never made sacrifices for me. Similarly where would you be if your parents didn’t make sacrifices for you! The sacrifices of others is what has given us life and the many opportunities we have to live today.

Sadly though there is a movement in our world today which promotes self-interest above sacrifice. We only have to look around us to see the pressure being pushed by those who want their way at the expense of sacrifice of self for the good of the community.

It is for this very reason our God in the person of Jesus Christ came to live amongst us, sacrificing himself to bring life and light into our lives. The passage from St John’s Gospel this weekend expresses this for us.

*“Jesus said to Nicodemus:*

*‘The Son of Man must be lifted up as Moses lifted up the serpent in the desert,*

*so that everyone who believes may have eternal life in him.*

*Yes, God loved the world so much that he gave his only Son,*

*so that everyone who believes in him may not be lost but may have eternal life.*

*For God sent his Son into the world not to condemn the world,*

*but so that through him the world might be saved.*

*No one who believes in him will be condemned;*

*but whoever refuses to believe is condemned already,*

*because he has refused to believe in the name of God’s only Son.*

*On these grounds is sentence pronounced: that though the light has come into the world*

*men have shown they prefer darkness to the light because their deeds were evil.*

*And indeed, everybody who does wrong hates the light and avoids it,*

*for fear his actions should be exposed;*

*but the man who lives by the truth comes out into the light,*

*so that it may be plainly seen that what he does is done in God.’”*

So as we draw closer to Easter may we take a few moments to ponder how we, as ‘God’s work of art’, recognise the love of God for you and for me, indeed for each one of us. Thereby as you make sacrifices for those you love so dearly, may you remember to thank our God for your life.

Over the next two weeks, please remember the children in Yrs 3 & 4 as they receive the Sacrament of Penance for the first time, seeking the forgiveness and gift of love from our God.

Hopefully in the coming weeks a lessening in the restrictions will allow more of us to gather in our Church to celebrate the Easter Ceremonies with greater numbers.

Our weekend Mass links are:

Saturday 13th March 6.00 pm Mass link:  <https://forms.gle/xEuJTbLWzdW7JVMf8>

Sunday 14th March 8.30 am Mass link:  <https://forms.gle/BDnkF8RfLCcoT4eo9>

Sunday 14th March 10.30 am Mass link:  <https://forms.gle/4cfuEd1QKggxoCK16>

Attached also are a copy of the Scripture readings for this weekend, the Children’s Work Sheets and a reflection for a thought during the week.

My blessing and prayerful thoughts for you and your loved ones,

Peter