Homily for the Fourth Sunday in Lent 2026 Year A

"Now you are light in the Lord". Those words of Saint Paul reminding us of our baptismal vocation are an important theme to think upon as Holy Week and Easter fast approaches.

With all the threats of violence and terrorism that surround us in the world today, our faith is often challenged. But that same threat can also serve to sharpen its focus and intensity.

Too often we have let the founding events of our faith slip into mere sentimentality and soft focus, something unreal, and this we have done to the Passion, the suffering and the death of Christ.

The evil and horror of Calvary has dimmed in our consciousness and our faith is the poorer because of it.

We have diluted the power and the meaning of Calvary to such an extent that, if we try to use it to explain the pain and suffering in our lives or the lives of others, it is inappropriate, and is of little or no consolation.

Every day in the "Our Father" we pray "deliver us from evil". Do we mean it or are they just words that we automatically say out of habit?

The Media brutally wakes us up to the reality of evil. It shows us that we do not live anymore in a safe, cosy and civilised world where everything is going to turn out alright. We now see, in the cruellest way possible, that in the world in which we live today there are no guarantees. You leave your home and your loved ones in the morning to go to work, or shop, or school, but there is no guarantee that you will all meet safe and sound again in the evening.

So, how do you live with that sort of knowledge and awareness? How do you plan, organise, and anticipate with any sort of conviction, when in reality at any moment a random, irrational, or motiveless touch of evil can shatter and destroy your life or the lives of those you love?

One answer of course is to make a tremendous act of faith and meet the challenge of each day with a spirit of hope, trust, optimism and courage. It is beautifully expressed for us in Psalms 22, "If I should walk in the valley of darkness, no evil shall I fear".

Each day we walk through such a valley and its darkness touches the edges of our lives, but it cannot conquer or overwhelm us if we choose to walk in the Light of the risen Christ.

Light is a powerful symbol; even the deepest darkness recedes to nothing in the presence of light.

In the Light of the risen Christ, the Light of the person of Christ, the Light of the example of Christ, we should see that death and evil can never have the final word.

Evil exists, it is very real, but as Saint Paul says, “these are the trials through which we triumph”.