

## Reflection 6<sup>th</sup> Sunday Year B 2021

One of the hardest lessons from the pandemic is being isolated. Cut off from society, from loved ones, from physical contact, and left alone with your own thoughts. Unless you have suffered this kind of isolation, you will never fully appreciate the damage and suffering it causes. Fortunately, people have offered support where possible and, in the exchange, come to see the damage isolation causes. Hopefully, in the future, we will be less ready to cut people off, push them out, refuse them entry into the community because of race, gender, and belief. Jesus would have encountered small groups of lepers in his early life and probably sought to help them if only to bring them food and clothing and be a friendly face. In healing the leper, he was also given a foretaste of isolation being unable to move about openly and having to live outside the community afterwards. It was a preparation for when he would be cruelly thrown out of the community and put to death as though he was a contamination rather than a healer of community.

**Kitty O'Meara** suggests social distancing could be taken up by purposeful activities such as dancing, exercise and self-reflection. Perhaps something other than darkness could come from isolation. . . .

*And the people stayed home. And read books, and listened, and rested, and exercised, and made art, and played games, and learned new ways of being, and were still. And listened more deeply. Some meditated, some prayed, some danced. Some met their shadows. And the people began to think differently.*

*And the people healed. And, in the absence of people living in ignorant, dangerous, mindless, and heartless ways, the earth began to heal.*

*And when the danger passed, and the people joined together again, they grieved their losses, and made new choices, and dreamed new images, and created new ways to live and heal the earth fully, as they had been healed.*

### Prayer:

I feel lost. Find me Lord, pull back the wreckage of my life so that I can breathe again.

I feel abandoned. Embrace me Lord, cover my wounds with your healing love so that I might stand restored.

I feel trapped. Cut the chains Lord, release me from the weights that drag me down. Come bring your freedom and hope.

I am desperate, yet I seek you God, the one who conquered the darkness, the one who rose from death, the one who said, "follow me"!

I will follow the brightness of your love. Even when it is all but a distant glimmer.

I will fix my eyes open it.

I feel lost, yet I am found in that light.

I feel abandoned, yet you are beside me.

I feel trapped, yet you call me to freedom.

I feel desperate, yet you lead me to peace.

I draw near to you Lord Jesus. Amen.

**"You have a very rare and extremely contagious condition"** the doctor told his patient.

**"We're going to have to put you in an isolation unit where you'll be on a diet of pancakes and pizza."**

**"Will the pancakes and pizza cure my condition?"** asked the patient.

**"No,"** replied the doctor. **"They're the only things we can slip under the door."**