

THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK

Wednesday 8th 2020

by Gillian Munro



Well, here we are in the third week of our virtual lock down. We have never experienced the kind of life we are leading now. In this busy world of hustle and bustle we now have the opportunity to slow down, take stock and move forward.

Jesus, during his ministry, on many occasions must have been experiencing a similar lifestyle to my norm. Now my regular activities have been curtailed, I am thrown back onto my own resources for social interaction with others, and I am finding new ways to make contact with friends and family, as well as realizing that solitude is still an essential part of my life. Jesus was continuously busy, but unlike myself, he was in the public eye for much of the time. He spent time with those around him and interacted with all kinds of people, from the academics from the temple to the lowliest and most despised of individuals. And yet during the time he was journeying through the country, we see on several occasions that Jesus needed to absent himself from the crowds, in order to commune with his Father.

We have just celebrated Palm Sunday, each of us in our own homes. At this point in Jesus' life, the crowds came together to give him an overt act of adulation and support, by publicly asserting him to be their leader. How quickly this enthusiasm dissipated. Once the people had returned home, the palm branches swept away, and the road cleared, the situation looked completely different. And the many who previously had waved palm branches, now deserted him. In the days leading up to Good Friday, when Jesus knew he was facing the ultimate sacrifice, he spent much time in isolation and contemplation, obviously devastated by what he had to face, and yet knowing that his Father was with him.

We see on our television screens how changed are our national beauty spots, devoid of visitors yet still reflecting their beauty; and our town centres, deserted by the usual throng of workers going about their business. And yet we all of us now have time to pause and look at our lives and

wonder whether this enforced isolation can be a blessing. If we can just put our worries about the future to one side, and concentrate on the knowledge that although we may be physically alone, we know that God is with us and surely will bring us through these difficult times.

In an article, penned several days ago, Terry Waite who endured 1763 days in prison, the majority of which was spent in solitary confinement, writes *“Today, without a doubt coronavirus will eventually be defeated.....the vast majority of us will be safe”*. He adds *“I had to learn to live one day at a time, to realise I still had my life, and I was determined to do my best to survive”*

I am trying, every day, to do my best and to make a difference. A change in my way of life, because I have time. I am trying to make contact with people to whom I haven't spoken for months. I am trying to be more disciplined about the everyday tasks that need to be done in my house and garden. In my mind I'm trying to imagine the difficulties others are having to deal with, which are far more serious than my own small problems. And I'm trying to spend more time with my God.

As we look forward to the pain of Good Friday, and the rejoicing of Easter Sunday, we ask that we may all spend more time in furthering our knowledge and understanding of the undying love of our God.