

Reflection for Thursday 7th May

Make your home a place of refuge

At this time of lockdown when we are unable to visit the church, even for private prayer, we need to find an alternative place of safety and refuge where we can find peace. We need a place where we can experience the presence of God in our lives and in our hearts.

Normally we might pop into the church for a few moments to pray and reflect while we are in the centre of Solihull or elsewhere. As Catholics we live our lives in the presence of God always mindful of his love and protection as we go through our daily activities. We need all the help we can get to do this faithfully so that we are not too distracted with other things which might lead us away from Our Lord.

Without the abiding presence of Jesus and his gifts of grace and mercy we can easily slip into the influence of the evil one. This is probably more likely because the devil knows that the churches are closed. He absolutely delights in the knowledge that we are cut off, to some extent, from our place of safety and refuge and he is intent on exploiting our weakness. Our weakness at the moment is that we are unable to go to the very place where we receive the strength to resist him most effectively and live according to the will of God. He isn't interested in doing the will of God and doesn't want us to either. His motto is 'non serviam' I will not serve, and his whole attitude is, 'no-one tells me what to do'.

In contrast we, as disciples of Our Lord try to imitate Jesus by being obedient to him, as he was obedient to the Father. We know that if we are obedient to the will of God he will work in our lives in ways we cannot imagine. So we must find a place in our world where we can find refuge from the forces of evil and this place can be the place we live. This is where we are spending most, if not all, our time at the moment in this period of lockdown. Our home needs to be a place of holiness where Jesus is clearly present and where our faith is clearly visible. Our homes should be places completely free of the influence

of the evil one. There is no place in the Catholic home, the domestic Church, for much of what passes for entertainment today however it arrives through TV or other media which promote secular values. We no longer have to sit in our homes and accept what the main TV channels want to pump into our homes. There's no longer any excuse to watch mindless soaps. We now have the power of choice over what we watch and can choose from an endless list of programmes from Youtube. For example, you might want to consider watching the most recent film series on the Life of Jesus called The Chosen.

<https://youtu.be/craeyJdrCsE>

If there is anything at home which you would be ashamed to let Jesus see now is the time to get rid of it. Our homes need to have sacred images, a crucifix and statue of Our Lady as a minimum and holy water to remind us of what we believe and what we hold to be important, a place of prayer where God is honoured. These things will make our home a place of refuge. We don't need to wait for the world to go crazy before we do these things. it's already happening, we are already in the end times as we wait for the Lord to return, as Timothy reminds us, *'You may be quite sure that in the last days there are going to be some difficult times...anybody who tries to live in devotion to Christ is certain to be attacked...'* (2Tim3:1 and 13)

May the Lord bless us and our homes and families and Our Lady protect us.

Deacon Kevin