Reflection for 17 May 2020

“No man is an island”; “You’ll never walk alone”; “for I am with you always”……

Familiar words indeed, but, during this lockdown, how many of us have struggled to believe them? When we have not seen family (except for virtually if we’re technical) for many weeks; when we are juggling childcare with home schooling, with working full time, with keeping everything together……

It can be hard not to feel isolated when we are meeting ourselves coming back and our usual places of refuge and solace are closed.

There are still wonderful people out there, keeping in touch with those who are on their own, those whose only human contact would be going to church. Phone calls, emails, Zoom chats, WhatsApp all great ways to keep in touch. But what of those dark times, those gaps between calls, those middle of the night, can’t sleep, moments? What then?

“You can feel alone in a crowd” might sound strange, but even in a house full of people you can still feel very much on your own.

Everybody is different. There is no “one size fits all” answer to this difficulty which most of us, if not all, will have felt at some point. Whether it’s Churchill’s Black Dog of depression, or self doubt, or just general fatigue of the situation, we need to find ways to brighten our day and keep our spirits up. So how about these…..

Go for a walk. Sunshine and fresh air are a great way to lift your mood.

Do something different. Instead of always having the same routine, mix it up and do it in a different order, or do a particular job on a different day.

Talk to someone. It can be incredibly difficult to pick up the phone when you feel down, but it really does help.

Most of all – pray. While this might seem like the hardest one to actually do, it can make all the difference. Whether it is on our knees beside our bed; or on our daily walk, or just an impassioned “Help”, God will hear. God will understand. God will answer. That light through a window, just as we feel at our lowest; that ring on the phone; that wave from a neighbour, that smile as we’re passing, are answers to our prayers.

And when we receive the gift of love from our neighbour, our relative, our friend, even a complete stranger – pass it on. For we don’t know what kind of day is hiding behind their smile.

Keep safe. Keep well. Keep faith. Keep smiling.

RevRuth