



Dear Friends

This Easter and the days leading to Pentecost will be an season like none before. Our necessary isolation from one another will undoubtedly save lives and help the health services cope, so we must somehow thank God for it. But it will nonetheless feel as if we've extended Lent, like an extra-long retreat, into Easter. Religious communities, monks and nuns, understand how to be joyful in isolation so perhaps we might adopt some of their spirit.

As Chaplain to the school community I want personally to thank you for all you are doing to serve others; helping to provide for other peoples' needs, by whatever means you can, while the tragic scourge of coronavirus is among us. Let's preserve our own health and well-being, too.

We shouldn't think of Easter this year as an antidote or cure for the seeping fear and strangeness of all we're going through together. If it were it would simply fall flat, or seem unbelievable, and we would rightly be, as St Paul says, 'the most miserable of women and men'. But Easter isn't simply a bit of the Jesus story, which comes round like a well-rehearsed play every year. Easter is, we know, in fact the actual normal state of life for those of us who believe, and makes us citizens of two worlds: this one, where even love cannot prevent death, and the eternal one Christians are baptized into, in which death can never quench love.

We should therefore not behave as those who have no hope. In the resurrection of his Son, God our Father lifts our eyes to an eternal and joy-filled horizon, and fills us with confidence. May God renew in us all the gifts of his Son's Resurrection; and breathe his Spirit on us; may he give us all the long view in our present difficulties, large-mindedness and generosity in our use of material goods, patience and perseverance at all times, and that special gift of God we call the gift of hope.

With my prayers and Easter Blessing for you all

Father Andrew Hutchinson

The Lord bless us and watch over us; The Lord make his face to shine upon us and be gracious to us; The Lord look kindly upon us and give us peace. Amen.