



 Auxiliary Bishop of Perth

7 May 2020

A Letter to the Elect and Candidates

My Brothers and Sisters in the Lord,

Greetings and peace in this Holy Season of Easter.

I am very conscious that you are feeling disappointed that your sacramental initiation and welcome into the Catholic Church has had to be delayed. Due to the restrictions that are currently in force as we as a society deal with the COVID-19 pandemic, you, perhaps more than most in our community of faith, have been very seriously impacted. The Archbishop and I are praying for you and your families so that you do not lose heart but draw even closer to Jesus Christ and your brothers and sisters in the faith.

The evening when we gathered in the Cathedral to celebrate your election was a joyous occasion. We began looking forward to your initiation or reception into the Church. There was a great sense of expectation and hope as you made the final step of passing from the catechumenate to being an Elect and for our candidates to be formally recognised. We knew that you were to prepare with prayer for the Easter Vigil and your Profession of Faith before your fellow parishioners.

We could not have realised that Lent would be so different and that every Catholic would have to use other means of praying as we all suffered the closure of our churches and the cancellation of the celebration of the Mass and other Sacraments.

The bishops and priests have been finding new ways to keep in touch with our people. Among them has been the live-streaming of Mass, which has been accessed by as many 30,000 people during Holy Week and on the days of Easter since. I have encouraged Catholics to use the Readings of Mass to enrich their daily prayer and reflections.

The Church has many other methods of prayer that can be used to deepen our relationship with Jesus Christ.

One simple method is to make a quiet time to sit in a relaxed way, focussing on the presence of Jesus by repeating his name with the rhythm of your breathing, thinking of nothing else. This prayer of quiet is an ancient Christian prayer, practised by the early hermits and monastic communities.

Remember that the Archbishop and I, as well as the priests, are celebrating the Mass each day for every person in the Archdiocese. This means that there is a communion being sustained between us with Jesus at the centre. The Elect are a special part of that communion of brothers and sisters.

I want to encourage you as we make our way through this difficult time. We look forward to the day when we can gather again as the people of God and enjoy the support and love of our communities. Your initiation and reception into the Church will be a very special moment for your parish, one full of joy.

With my blessing,

Bishop Don Sproxton
Auxiliary Bishop