



## **April 20, 2020-Reflections for the Easter Season Ms. Albano**

In the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

Dear God, I acknowledge the Mississauga's of the Credit First Nation for being the ongoing stewards of this traditional territory.

### ***A reading from the Gospel of John***

*A week later Jesus' disciples were again in the house, and Thomas was with them. Although the doors were shut, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you." Then he said to Thomas, "Put your finger here and see my hands. Reach out your hand and put it in my side. Do not doubt but believe." Thomas answered him, "My Lord and my God!" <sup>29</sup>Jesus said to him, "Have you believed because you have seen me? Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have come to believe."*

Perhaps the saddest tragedy to unfold in Canada are the COVID 19 cases and deaths occurring in our long-term care facilities. Places where families have entrusted others to protect and care for their family. Images of families who have said goodbye to their loved ones from a distance. Tragedies we were trying to avoid through our isolation. But suffering we could not avoid, as many observers have said because of the preexisting problems in these facilities.

We see how our priorities as a nation has caused these places to be unequipped with adequate resources and personal to provide basic care for its patients. Sadly, problems that would have continued if the pandemic never occurred. A truth that the virus exposed. One of the most under funded workers and isolated groups in our society are the residents of long care-facilities, which include the elderly and adults who need daily specialized medical care.

With the images from Quebec and Ontario homes filling our media feed, we, like our political leaders, want these problems too be fixed in these places. Unfortunately, some of us need, just like Thomas, to see these tragic images to demand change. But unlike Thomas, as Jesus said, some have already been fighting for the equality and quality health treatment in these places. However, Jesus doesn't condemn Thomas for not believing but provides the opportunity for change. In this moment, Thomas proclaims, "My Lord and My God." Here lies the beauty of this story. We have not seen like Thomas but can proclaim the same message and even if we failed to see our chronic problem before COVID-19, this is our time to change and place our energy in helping others.

Let us pray that in faith we may see the chronic problems which existed pre-COVID 19 and take action to help those silent in our society, especially residents of long care facilities. May we pray for those personal support workers who have and will daily take care of our loved ones when we are unable or can't do it in our homes. May those who continue to work in our essential service find support and when our restrictions are lifted may we continue to advocate for those who work and live in these facilities. Last, like Thomas, may we call out My Lord and My God when we fail to see and need help in the days ahead. May you always remember the words of Jesus at the Ascension, "remember I am with you always till the end of days." Amen. In the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Amen.