

**May 12, 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 Acts of the Apostles***

*“After Paul and Barnabas had proclaimed the good news to that city and had made many disciples, they returned to Lystra, then on to Iconium and Antioch. There they strengthened the souls of the disciples and encouraged them to continue in the faith, saying, ‘It is through many persecutions that we must enter the kingdom of God.’ And after they had appointed elders for them in each church, with prayer and fasting they entrusted them to the Lord in whom they had come to believe.” (Acts 14:21-23)*

As we begin to slowly return to opening our economy, what will our communities look like? Will things be normal? As we move more within our communities, everything looks and feels the same, but we know that things have changed. Within months, we have changed.

I live in an area where more people are walking with their families, but there is less interaction amongst the people outside. There are fewer conversations between the dog owners and the gardeners who enjoy sharing their tips of how to keep a lawn free from dandelions and other weeds with their neighbour. When you see someone on the sidewalk, you either move off the path or cross the streets to practice physical distancing. There are more people sporting face coverings and less looking at someone in the eye. As we return to the new normal, we will have to continue these practices and live with the fear of COVID-19. However, we can do it. If we remember that at the heart of our faith is Christ who showed us to love God and neighbour with all our heart. With this truth, we can continue to make those changes and sacrifices so we can let go of the way we used to do things. Yes, it will be an adjustment, but if those who are healthy and have means, continue to watch out for their neighbour, especially in our shopping practices and in giving, we will survive with our humanity more enriched by the experience.

As Paul and Barnabas had to do when they traveled outside their city walls. They had to face persecution and death, but continued on with a fearlessness to be cautious but not scared. Organized and purposeful in their interactions with others and then entrusting those they taught to carry on in preaching the Gospel in prayer and practice. Trusting that what they planted in others would continue in their absence.

As the government lifts the restrictions, may we continue to watch out for each other. To not give in to going back to old habits of going where I please and being less attentive to my neighbours. May we continue to practice social distancing and watch out for the most vulnerable. May God's love be our guide in the weeks ahead as this new norm will require all of us to change our selfish and inattentive behaviour. May we continue to give without ceasing and having the humility to remember we are all vulnerable in this pandemic. May you always carry in your heart 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

