

Advent Reflection 1st Sunday 2020

As the veil of Advent 2020 is drawn back and we enter this season of promise, we give thanks for the many graces and blessings that we have received this year.

As the pandemic swept across the world, we have been asked to deepen our lives of faith, community and prayer. The loss of shared worship has offered us new opportunities to reflect on how we live the Gospel today as we seek out new ways of praying and responding to the needs of this time. Beautiful, reflective liturgies have been made available to us from many different places at all times of the day confirming the universality of the faith we share and the co-responsibility that we have for each other.

As one, we have grieved for all who have lost their lives, loved ones, homes and at times, hope. The sadness and isolation of the millions who have been unable to receive visits at home, in Care Homes, hospitals and hospices has touched us deeply. The silent suffering of children, the disabled, mentally ill, Special Needs people, refugees, asylum seekers and trafficked persons is known only to God. The untold anguish of victims of domestic violence has never been more acute as the numbers affected has exploded. The stress of illness, home schooling, job losses and a pervasive anxiety about the future has left many families vulnerable to great suffering. Religious communities have wept at the loss of dearly loved members and have been challenged once more to re-evaluate how to live in communion with each other each day and bear witness to the Gospel of life.

The charism of our congregation impels us to reach out in compassion to all who suffer both within and outside the walls of our homes. As we enter into this Advent season we ask for the grace to be open to new ways of being church and first responders to the cry that pervades our world at this time. We beseech the intercession of Mary and Joseph who travelled as one on their sacred journey awaiting the birth of the God of all life. We ask them to guide our congregation, churches and governments in our shared response to the needs of this time. May the blessing of peace, the hallmark of their home bring healing, renewal and deep hope to our world at this time.

Sister Siobhán

