



Diocese of Eastern Newfoundland and Labrador

The Anglican Church of Canada

The Right Reverend Dr. Geoff Peddle, M.Div., Ph.D.
Bishop of Eastern Newfoundland and Labrador

ANGLICAN DIOCESAN CENTRE
19 King's Bridge Road
St. John's, NL A1C 3K4
Telephone: (709) 576-6697
Fax: (709) 576-7122
Email: geoffpeddle48@gmail.com

April 6, 2020

Dear Friends,

I greet you a few days before Easter as we move through the events of Holy Week in a way unlike any Holy Week before. This is usually a time of many public services and gatherings where we meet face to face, but this year because of Covid-19 our Holy Week journey must be done with physical distance from one another although we can draw close spiritually and emotionally. Through the use of the internet and related technologies we are able to join together in worship this week and also at Easter – the great festival of our Lord's Resurrection. It continues to break my heart to ask you to refrain from public celebrations of the Holy Eucharist, but I do believe this is best for all right now. In our absence from one another and in our absence from that sacrament there is a longing that will one day soon, we pray, become the presence we desire. Some of you have spoken to me about holding a second Easter celebration at a later date when this has passed and we can celebrate the Holy Eucharist together and I fully support your desire to do that as long as you still keep Easter on April 12.

I know that almost all of our parishes and worshipping communities are offering services online this week and at Easter and I will also lead services at our Cathedral on Maundy Thursday, Good Friday and Easter Sunday to be livestreamed at the time and available afterward on our Facebook site and on YouTube. A prayer that I will be using this week with some adaptation comes to me from St. Thomas' Church in Toronto via Archdeacon Roger Whalen at our own Cathedral and it is called *An Act of Spiritual Communion*:

My Jesus, I believe that you are truly present in the Holy Sacrament. And since I cannot now receive you sacramentally, I ask you to come spiritually into my heart. I unite myself with you, and embrace you with all the affections of my soul. Let me never be separated from you. Let me live and die in your love. Amen.

As Christians we are people of hope and our hope is in God and in the promise of his Son to one day restore all things to their intended perfection. As a sign of that Christian hope, many churches across Canada are setting a time on Easter Sunday to ring out their bells to proclaim that Christ is Risen and I commend to you to do the same if your church has bells or even if it has electronic chimes. The Dioceses of Central and Western Newfoundland have asked their churches to do that around 11 a.m. on Easter Sunday and I believe we should also do the same in the Diocese of Eastern Newfoundland and Labrador. This is a very audible way for us to share the joy and hope that is in our hearts at Easter and also, if you want, a "shout-out" to all those wonderful people who remain working on the front line of this pandemic caring for us all.

I continue to hear amazing and inspiring stories of how our various faith communities are looking after everyone at this time and I hold in *my* heart all who are sharing the hope that is in *their* hearts. I encourage everyone to support their local church as best they can right now because this will not be forever, and I really

want to see our churches come roaring back to life again when we get the “all clear” down the road. Some of our ministries that involve social get-togethers and the sharing of meals (and what Anglican gathering does not involve food?!) have to be suspended but please continue to look out for your friends and neighbours and do what you can in an individual way until we meet again. I was inspired by the message of Queen Elizabeth II this week and if you can, please find a recording of Vera Lynn singing “*We’ll Meet Again.*” Just as that song gave hope to millions during the dark days of World War II let it give us hope this Easter:

*We'll meet again
 Don't know where
 Don't know when
 But I know we'll meet again some sunny day
 Keep smiling through
 Just like you always do
 'Till the blue skies drive the dark clouds far away ...*

Let us look forward in faith to that day we can all be together in person once again and let us hold firmly in faith and love to one another today and always.

With my every blessing,
 +*Geoffrey*

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HsM_VmN6ytk