

QUARANTINE 15

🎧 Reach out and touch somebody's hand, Make this world a better place if you can! - Diana Ross

Being in the extremely vulnerable group has meant I've had to isolate a little bit more than just the social distancing and self isolating. The one thing that has been difficult is the lack of touch. Unless you have to live without any kind of physical touch from another you probably don't even notice how often you are touched by another. The act of passing a cup of tea to a loved one - the touch might only be brief, only a nanosecond but it's there nonetheless.

Those fleeting fingertip moments make me think of the Michelangelo Fresco painting The Creation Of Adam, the image of God reaching out and touching the hand of Adam bringing him into human being. It makes me wonder was the touch fleeting or did it linger until Adam upped and went about being a man.

Today we had a minutes silence for the key workers who have lost life lives to this virus coved-19. We are visibly touched at the sorrow that was shown on the television but that sorrow seems much greater because of the required social distancing that has to be observed, during any other scenario people would have held hands or taken comfort in the closeness of each other.

When we consider touch in the bible most of us will recollect the woman who had bleeding for many years and had suffered quite badly. She came up behind Jesus and touched his cloak. She believed just by touching even something Jesus wore she would be healed. And Jesus knew, he knew that someone in need, yet with great faith had sought him out and touched him. (Mark 5: 25-34)

People thought Jesus ministry brought their loved ones to him so that he might touch them and heal them.

When I assist with communion there is something very special in the distribution of the elements when we place them in the hands of the recipients and say the words, "Body of Christ Broken for you or Blood of Christ shared for you", the brief touch when sharing those element with people is very important and special. It connects us in a way that is just too difficult for me to describe or to attribute words to.

I've never considered myself much of a 'touchy feely 'person - I'm not always a huge fan of sharing the peace, where we shake hands or hug each other; mainly because those encounters for me cause physical pain which can sometimes last for days. But I right now would consider myself blessed for the vigorous, firm handshake or the tight bear hug squeeze.

The lack of touch from loved ones when people are sick or grieving leaves us in the state of almost animated suspense, it feels wrong or surreal and so very abnormal. We are human beings and we are meant to touch each other even if only fleetingly and how we are living and being right now just make everything feel out of kilter and unsettled.

When this is over and we are allowed to be closer to each other and we can be a physical interacting community once more - savour that first fleeting touch, imprint that first hug onto your heart but for now take comfort and peace from the knowledge that Jesus touches you every day with his comforting loving embrace, today, tomorrow and always.

Stay safe, God Bless.

"For he had healed many people, and the other sick kept pushing their way to him in order to touch him." - Mark 3:10



**"God is our refuge and strength,
a very present help in trouble."**

Psalm 46:1