

*My dear friends in Christ,*

*“Peace not war!” “Ask not your country can do for you, but ask what you can do for your country!” “A small step of man is a giant step for mankind!” Remember these things? They happened in the 1960’s. Many of us don’t remember much of these things. Too young to remember!*

*Perhaps one of the most memorable moments in the history of this country! It was a decade of new discovery and space exploration. It was a time when the world witnessed the first landing on the moon. It was a decade of Golden Age Television: the Ed Sullivan Show, I love Lucy, That Girl. It was a time of great movies: The Sound of Music, Oliver, the Apartment. It was a decade of new fashion, from Elvis haircut to the Beatles. But the 1960’s was also a decade that changed the course of our history. It was a time of social and political unrest. There were the antiwar demonstrations on the Vietnam War and the civil rights movements. It was a decade of racial division and violence. It was a time of irrational atmosphere. It was a time when you were seen not in the content of your character but in the color of your skin. It was a time of hate and anger that resulted in people, young and old, men and women, helpless and innocent, being killed or hurt. It was a time of condemnation and ignorance! Sad to say that these things still exist in our society today! This is the kind of behavior that we need to change before we get to the waters of life at Easter! In the Gospel of John, Jesus talks about this human behavior that has no place in our society! Jesus challenges us, “Let the one among you who is without sin cast the first stone!”*

*On this Fifth Sunday of Lent, Jesus is asking us to examine our hearts. Jesus is asking us today in the Gospel to rise from the tomb of condemnation and hatred, from the tomb of prejudice and ignorance, from the tomb of selfishness and self-centeredness, from the tomb of anger and hatred. He calls us from the darkness of our tomb: “Lazarus, come out!”*

*Today as he did two thousand years ago, Jesus calls us, the Lazarus of today, to a higher standard of living in following the commandment to love and to rise up from the darkness of our spiritual tomb.*

*I am going to repeat it again. We are LOCKED DOWN but not LOCKED OUT from God’s LIFE and LOVE!*

*Jesus many times mentioned that anger and ignorance has no place in our life and in the kingdom! He said that anger can lead to violence and murder. During this season of Lent, Jesus is inviting us to fill our hearts with beauty, forgiveness and reconciliation. He demands a greater awareness and motivation and a holier way of life through personal transformation and conversion. The gospel challenges us to be a person and reflection of God in the world, loving as God loves, caring as God cares, forgiving as God forgives. This is a call to Christian life. This is the way to the kingdom!*

*I believe that if we want to find meaning in our Lenten journey, we need to let go of the so-called “bad habits of the heart!” Today Jesus invites us to rise up for a new beginning especially as we are about to enter into the holiest week of our liturgical year! Yes I know of the challenge and the difficulty of this Covid19 we are all facing! But I have seen people from all walks of life, journeying together and discovering each other as brothers and sisters, putting aside their differences by planting the seed of love and forgiveness in their hearts. We are really together, more reflective and prayerful during this time! What a grace momentt! People have decided that anger and ignorance and hatred have no place in our hearts. From being so distant and so different from each other in the past, now they are closer and more connected than ever with each other in spite of the distance but brought together by LOVE and our FAITH!*

***Our LENTEN JOURNEY continues: FROM SLAVERY TO FREEDOM! May God bless us all in our journey towards the waters of life at Easter!***

***In Christ,  
Fr. Geoffrey***