

Reflection from Fr. Colm on Maundy Thursday

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Good morning all the cloudy sky greets us this morning after the hottest day of the year yesterday. I do hope you were able to avail of yesterday's sunshine wherever you are and in whatever constricted surroundings you may find yourself and many of you do, I know.

Steven Pinker is a world bestselling author on life and ideas. He was recently interviewed to give his take on our present predicament. When asked how life would change after it was over, he nonchalantly smiled and replied "*Well it won't. People will continue on as before. Life will continue on as before,*" he said.

Now this left me very uneasy because I thought is, he actually, is he really accurate? Will life and people be the same? And who I am to disagree with such a highly lauded voice. Questions. So unsettled was I that it made me dig deeper and reflect deeper. Not a bad thing you will say. And my conclusion was that he is wrong. I know life will not be the same. Questions will be asked. Accountability will be sought. But from the immediate surroundings of my environment life has taken on a very different perspectives alone. I'm talking here about the wonderful acts of kindness and decency coming from so many and indeed at times from quarters that we may not have expected them. Those often small hidden expressions of decency that having nothing to do with the promised billions of the Bill Gates and the Mark Zuckerbergs of this world or the promised millions from the Lady Gaga inspired musical jamboree. Good as these are in themselves, I'm talking here about the continued chain of support that I see in the parish and beyond. The delivered meals, the dropped off newsletters, the endless phone calls, texting, the emails just to check out that we care for you. And this to me is why life will never be the same again.

Even at a broader level will we not reflect more on the neglected heroes of our health service, the low paid workers who have shone a light of decency on a thoroughly awful predicament that so many of us find ourselves. That light of goodness. That light of service.

Today is Maundy or Holy Thursday. At 11 am this morning the priests of the diocese would ordinarily assemble in the cathedral in Newcastle to

reaffirm their ministerial calling and be affirmed also in that same calling. The Holy oils will be blessed, all marvellous liturgical and sacramental expressions of the role of service that we each are all called to.

Tonight, the Mass of the Lord's Supper will remind us that one single act that is the truest expression of our Christian and our Eucharistic calling is service. I will be with you in spirit tonight supported by your many ,many acts of service and kindness over these weeks and I would ask you to please join me especially between 8 and 9 if you can for that great hour of quiet before the reposed Sacrament and that will be on Facebook for those who can access that, ok. So, God bless you again today and I'll speak to you again tomorrow, Good Friday.