

Reflection from Fr. Colm on Monday of the 5th week of Eastertide

Audio posted to the Parish Website on Monday 11th May 2020

Good morning. In the Acts of the Apostles this morning there is a very powerful line which is, it contains I think a profound truth of life. We're told in the Acts that a crippled man who couldn't walk from birth "*he managed to catch his eye*" and the person he managed to catch the eye of was St Paul. There's this massive human contact taking place now which enables Paul to move in and transform this man's life.

That eye contact - hugely important. I recall instances in my own life when I have failed in that area. I often went into the intensive care unit in the RVI on a daily basis but one morning I was distracted but a nurse who I knew very well, a great, great nurse she said to me, "*Father, you're not listening to me.*" She could tell by my not looking at her when she was speaking.

Psychologists have been able to tell of the massive importance of eye contact between mother and child especially in the first months after birth. We could even tell if there's a friction in the air between couples if no eye contact is being made between them. Very often a glance of real kindness is more healing than all the well-intentioned words that we have. And indeed love, romance often begins with the eyes, brought out beautifully I thought in Zeffirelli's *Romeo and Juliet*.

In the Year of Mercy this is a few years back Pope Francis said, "*Almsgiving is a gesture of love which directs us to all those we meet: it is a gesture of sincere attention to those who come to us and ask for help, we should not identify almsgiving simply with a hastily given monetary offering without looking at the person, without stopping to talk, to understand what they really need.*" and then he added, "*to stop and look in the face, look in the eyes of the person who is asking for help.*"

Good morning.