

Reflection from Fr. Colm on Thursday of the 3rd week of Eastertide

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Good morning everybody. Hope you're okay. One of the phenomena of the recent lock down has been, particularly for church goers, the very often comment "*I was at Mass in Burtonport in County Donegal or I was at Mass in Winnipeg in Canada, or I was at Mass in...*" the list goes on.

However, you will also hear the comments "*Well, I didn't like it there because your man preached for twenty minutes and I went off and had a cup of tea while he was preaching*" or "*Aw he's very good that fellow he speaks, he's quick, he's got a quick sermon, gets to the point and I like that.*" And I suppose if I were to ask parishioners where they go to Mass either on a daily basis or at weekends the choices are as great as the number of parishioners that actually come to Mass at the weekend. Such is the digital age in which we're living in.

However, that's my big concern about webcams etc. There's, while the digital age has an attraction and a connectedness it actually also has a disconnect. And where's that disconnect? It's all to do with basic human contact, one-to-one, person to person, a smile, a chat, just human intimacy.

Brian Turner is a psychotherapist within the context of the positives and negatives of our video connectedness that we are experiencing now did say "*Video calling sometimes has a disassociating effect, one where we can 'zone out' of our interaction as our mind becomes confused by the lack of physical connection despite the visual one. We have the most technology at the moment but possibly almost the most loneliness.*" And there's the irony, there's the kick.

The bottom line of course will always be to what degree we are drawn towards Jesus, and towards our faith and towards our Church in faith. To what degree do we allow the grace of God to touch us, to draw us. That's much deeper than the visual and indeed even deeper than the physical contact, though all are very important. It's a profound deep intimacy.

And we find that in the Gospel today from St John which can always be to some degree complicated but very simple on other levels. Jesus talks about being drawn to the Father, being drawn to Him, being drawn by

His grace, being drawn by who He is. *"No one can come to Me unless drawn by the Father who sent Me, and I will raise that person up on the last day."* Good morning everybody.