

Reflection from Fr. Colm on Wednesday of Holy Week

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Good morning everybody on this lovely morning. Today is Wednesday of Holy Week and also known as, traditionally, as "Spy Wednesday" a reminder again of the role of Judas. It is also the day after our first parish council which was held via zoom. Thank God for Social Media.

Also, this day each year we normally have a parish Mini Triduum. We don't call it so to trivialise the importance of the day or indeed the week it's so called because we gather as a parish community all the housebound and elderly for a service which incorporates the three days of the Holy Triduum - Holy Thursday, Good Friday and Easter Sunday. And they are brought here by carers, family members, members of the St Vincent De Paul and friends. The service lasts a little over an hour and they receive the anointing of the holy oils, the kissing of the cross, the holy cross, the washing of hands which substitutes for the washing of the feet obviously and finally Holy Communion. After the service we gather for tea and sandwiches in the parish room we are also joined by altar servers who love being a part of the entire ceremony. The links between young and old are so very evidently strong and very, very warm. It is our way of honouring these senior members of parish and society. Sadly, this service will not happen, and I most certainly will miss it this year because of COVID-19.

The former Supreme Court Judge and historian Jonathan Sumption wrote in last Sunday's Sunday Times a criticism of the present lockdown and its effects on mental health and the economy. Yes, while I do agree, or disagree with some of his main criticisms I did find some of his observations very good particularly on our attitude towards sickness, the elderly and death. He wrote " *We have also acquired today an irrational horror of death. Today death is the great obscenity, inevitable but somehow unnatural. In the midst of life our ancestors lived life with death as an ever-present fact that they understood and accommodated. They experienced the death of friends and family, young and old, generally at home. Today it is hidden away in hospitals and care homes, out of sight and out of mind, unmentionable until it strikes.*" Sadly COVID-19 has made us painfully aware of the reality of death.

Indeed, at yesterday's daily press conference, the foreign secretary was asked how come the Prime Minister and two of his key advisors should

even succumb to the virus. the answer was brief "And why not?" he said, "None of us our immune." Indeed, none of us are immune from suffering, from death.

Holy Week gently reminds us of this fact but also that there is something else. There is healing, there is goodness and there is above all else hope. Have a lovely day now.