

Peace be with you

On the evening of that first day of the week, when the disciples were together, with the doors locked for fear of the Jewish leaders, Jesus came and stood among them and said, 'Peace be with you!' After he said this, he showed them his hands and side. The disciples were overjoyed when they saw the Lord. (John20:19,20)

The friends of Jesus were staying behind locked doors, with all sorts of fears crowding their tired minds. They viewed the outside world as a dangerous place – and they were right, Jesus himself had recently been put to death by the hands of the authorities. Nevertheless as one risen from the dead Jesus' reassuring words to them were 'Peace be with you'. Such an expression can be no more than a meaningless platitude without the backing of divine authority.

As followers of Jesus in these fearful times we would like to say to you in his name: 'Peace be with you'. Peace be upon your home and your hearts. Peace be with your coming in and your going out, your waking and your sleeping. Peace be with your family and your friends and with all those that you love.

We do so in the name of the one who had overcome death.

We do so as children of the author of all life.

We do so with the love of the Father who has shown his love for us in giving us his only son.

And so emboldened in the love of Christ our message for those who might find themselves staying indoors during the present coronavirus epidemic is: 'The peace of God be with you.'