



St John's Cathedral 聖公會聖約翰座堂

Anglican Diocese of Hong Kong Island
Hong Kong Sheng Kung Hui

Message of Hope: Be Thankful!

13th May 2020

The Very Revd Matthias Der, Dean

Peace be with you. I am Matthias Der, Dean of St John's Cathedral, Hong Kong.

Life has not been easy these days with the outbreak of the COVID-19. We continue to offer our prayers for all those who are suffering physically, emotionally, mentally and economically during this trying time.

In a time like this, how can we stay positive?

Years ago, I saw a sign which says "Count your blessings not your problems!" So often, we tend to zoom in and get bogged down by the problems we have. We allow our imagination goes wild and the worst scenario occupies our mind. We scare ourselves with the things that we come up with, which many of them will not come true in real life. That is not a constructive way to live.

The Bible says "Give thanks in all things".

You may say, "How is that possible? Look around us. With the grim situation we are in, how can we be thankful?" Have you noticed that the Bible does not say we should give thanks for all things but give thanks in all things? By being intentional in giving thanks, we are reminded that God's love and his presence are there no matter what we are facing. We give thanks to God for His guidance and protection. We offer the outcome to him, trusting that God's presence is always with us. Yes, we may find it difficult to give thanks for the circumstance itself but we should learn to give thanks for God's faithfulness and care. This act of gratitude will give us strength and grace to persevere. Counting blessing is actually a life habit that we need to cultivate.

In the past few months, there are many things we can be thankful for.

I thank God for all those who have given me encouragement and support- friends, family and even strangers who through a smile or a text told me that things would get better one day and that they were thinking of me.

I thank God for the medical personnel who put their lives on the line to care and save people. I thank God for all the hospital support staff, the cleaners, the ambulance attendants, the people who run the quarantine centres, the government and health authorities who have carefully guided us through this crisis.

I thank God for all those who have been vigilant and patient in doing their part in staying at home and maintaining social distancing.

I thank God for the effort put in for a clean environment to live in. We have clean water to wash our hands. Most public places are disinfected on a regular basis. Our streets are kept clean.

I am grateful to so many who keep our lives stable and well-provided; the food chain workers, those who operate public transportation, those maintain laws and order, those working in logistics, shops, restaurants and those deliver food to our homes, just to name a few.

I thank God for life and for stable health.

I thank God for the church community, for God himself and for giving me faith in Jesus Christ which sustains me in times like these.

I am sure you can think of many blessings in life as well.

So easily, we take things for granted. We shouldn't! These are God's blessings for us and we should offer our thanks and praise to God.

Take some time today to count the blessings that God has given us. Write them down on a notebook or on our phone so we won't forget them easily. By giving thanks, it will encourage us and give us a sense of hope. It will refresh our faith in the risen Christ.

God bless you all!