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Catholic Parish of Whangarei

Dear Parishioners

As I write; today is the Feast of the Annunciation (Nine months to Christmas). Its good to remember the words of the Angel when asking Mary to be the mother of Jesus “**Do not be afraid**”. Perhaps that is easier said than done. After the death of Jesus, the disciples were locked away for fear of the Jews. Jesus appeared among them and his first words were “**Peace be with you**”. Then he showed them his wounded hands and side. It is good to acknowledge and bring to God how we are feeling.

While some of you have the memories of Depression and War – this is something different again. I find some consolation in praying one of the oldest Christian prayers:

***We fly to Thy protection, O Holy Mother of God.
Do not despise our prayers and our necessities,
but deliver us always from all dangers,
O Glorious and Blessed Virgin.***

Let us pray for the protection of all; especially those who are sick and the medical staff who care for them.

We need to follow the guidance of the ministry of Health and hopefully we will be ok. This can be for a Lenten Season like none other. A time of coming close to one another and the Lord. I encourage you to keep in touch with others.

In 2012 I made a 30 day silent Retreat on my own at a Jesuit house on Sydney. I got through it one day at a time. That reminds me of the song “*one day at a time sweet Jesus, that is what I am asking of you*”..

Be assured you are in our prayers
All Blessings, care and peace in this time.

Fr Chris Martin s.m.