



Speaking the truth in love

Eph 4:15

EASTER MESSAGE 2020

Catholic Archbishop of Sydney,

Most Rev. Anthony Fisher OP

Dare we hope in a world that is suffering? It can seem impossible, even insensitive, to talk of hope when people are sick or dying, anxious or isolated, unemployed or otherwise burdened.

One of my Dominican brothers in England, with whom I once lived, died of COVID19 this week. 18 more Dominicans have it in Europe.

I can't visit my own parents here in Sydney because their nursing home is locked down.

So I know something of the burden this epidemic is on people.

We've been through plagues before. Some have been devastating. But eventually they pass.

After Good Friday comes Easter, after the tomb new life.

In 1919 Spanish flu took 15,000 Australian lives. But we bounced back, and our society and economy prospered.

Though the pandemic had closed churches and stopped Masses, Australian Catholics also bounced back, recovering from their long Eucharistic fast by building many churches and doubling their practising rate. There's every reason to expect we'll recover this time, sooner rather than later, and maybe stronger, more united, more idealistic – if we learn the lessons.

Think of the countless acts of selfless service we've witnessed of late from health workers, neighbours, families, pastors. Think of the novel pastoral responses to this novel coronavirus. In times like these people of faith and ideals really shine.

On Easter night the new Easter candle is normally lit and carried into the Church as a symbol of Christ, our light returned and hope restored. This year there'll be no congregation to light their own candles from it. But

already people are demonstrating Easter light in their works of mercy and prayer.

God bless you and your loved ones in this strange but holy time.

A handwritten signature in green ink that reads "+ Anthony Fisher OP". The signature is written in a cursive style with a small cross at the beginning.

Most Rev. Anthony Fisher OP, DD BA LIB BTheol DPhil
Archbishop of Sydney