

From the desk of Ian Duckworth - Reflection on James 2

These days there are no small DEEDS - even a little can go a long way. Riddled throughout this reflection are links to various bible verses, YouTube videos and music videos as a very small deed to help pass the time for those stuck at home (watch for any underlined words).

When I was visiting the schools in February, I was going around sharing from the letter of James on the importance of DEEDS as well as FAITH. Now more than ever we have the opportunity to use our deeds as a way to shine God's love brightly into our world.

The church building may be closed, but, the church isn't closed - WE ARE THE CHURCH and we must continue to be the church in the world. Those who can, it's important that we keep in contact with the shut-ins, the lonely and the needy. You may have heard stories of people taking care of those who are most vulnerable - even Jimmy Kimmel is encouraging people to be kind and creative in the ways we serve and treat one another.

In times of uncertainty it's really easy to focus on ourselves - especially with all the NETFLIX to binge watch and video games to play but something as simple as a telephone call to an elderly neighbour checking in and asking if you can get anything for them can mean a lot. Case in point: I called my neighbour and offered to pick groceries up for them as I was going out anyway. I really didn't think it was that big of a deal, but they were so grateful! I dropped the milk off and started the 10 second walk back to the house and before I even got to the door, the phone was ringing - the neighbour calling to say thank you - total amount of energy expended on the deed was a 20 second round trip to their house and the desire to help out inspired by the second most important commandment according to Jesus - "Love Your neighbour as yourself". If we can keep our hearts in tune to Jesus during these times, we'll not only be okay, but we'll come out the other end of this more compassionate and Christ-like.

Easter will be very different for all of us with our usual gathering places closed, but we can reflect on the Lord's Passion. Even the word itself "Passion" means 'to suffer', which there has been and will be a lot of over the next few months. But the word "compassion" means 'to suffer together'. Jesus took on our suffering so we didn't have to endure our sufferings alone. Let us all reflect and pray on how we can show compassion to those in our families, communities and world and make this the most hands-on Lent ever despite the social distancing barrier. Let us let go of any fear and uncertainty and and turn outwards to those who need us.

God bless and stay safe!