



Good morning everyone, and welcome to the very first THINK ON THESE THINGS daily devotion! Paul in his letter to the Philippians (4:4 – 8) has this to say...

<sup>4</sup> Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice! <sup>5</sup> Let your gentleness be evident to all. The Lord is near. <sup>6</sup> Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. <sup>7</sup> And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

<sup>8</sup> Finally, brothers and sisters, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy - **think on these things**.....

Over the coming days we'll be thinking about some of the things that challenge and motivate us about our faith.

A few days ago Pat chuckled and said to me “Isn’t it just as well we love each other!” We had been reflecting on the dramatic changes that all family units would have to cope with under what might appear to be a fairly draconian regime. All the freedoms that we had been taking for granted now suddenly removed, and where there was space, now confinement. This experience may well end up being the making or breaking of many relationships as people are having to deal with a very different kind of stress – the stress generated by living in each other’s pocket’s day in and day out.

Many years ago St. Augustine reflected on how he was drawn toward the Christian faith, and one of the most significant elements was the depth of relationship he witnessed between them. “See how they love one another”, he wrote, and so began his journey serving the Lord.

Loving each other under these circumstances means doing things very differently, and I have been greatly heartened by the conversations I have been having with our church family, and how you all have taken very seriously not only the instruction to “hunker down” and to look after yourself, but also to stay in regular touch with each other. Having a regular chat with folk throughout the day can and does make a huge difference, so keep chatting!

There are going to be many more difficult days ahead, but by staying in touch with each other, we will be able to bring those stress levels down, and maintain those strong bonds between all of us!

**Breath-Prayer for Today:** I praise you, O God, because even when I am facing difficult times, you are always at work in my life and my world.