Dear friends in Christ,

During this time of “diaspora,” though we be physically separate corporally, though we cannot meet Sunday mornings for worship, know that we are together spiritually. Know that your beneficent God holds you precious in His sight—Dylan Thomas’ phrase describes it as “Golden in the mercy of his means”. Though we are not able to gather for common worship, there are plenty of opportunities to continue in our Anglican tradition of praise and thanksgiving—daily and Sundays. In the weeks to come, I will pass along some tips and opportunities that might enable us not only to survive spiritually, but to thrive during these troubling times. Remember the troubles of our Jewish ancestors when they were displaced into bondage and separate from their culture, countrymen, and temples. Again and again they renewed their love of the Lord, and returned to Him for comfort and meaning. The things that were not necessary, good for them, or evil things were left behind. They were discarded while a restorative effort to know God replaced those pernicious objects of affection.

I include three attachments to this little epistle:

1. A copy of an order for Family Worship from the New Zealand Book of Common Prayer. This is a very simple form of worship suitable to many family dynamics in terms of size and time. You should use the lessons from the Daily Office Lectionary (more on Lectionaries to come!)
2. A copy of the Daily office, again from the New Zealand BOCP. Again, use the Daily Office Lectionary for the readings.
3. A list of links to find neat stuff online:
   1. The first is a link to the Daily Office read aloud online. This is refreshed daily, and you can listen as you drive! Unless you are very familiar with the daily office (memorized or nearly so) you will want your Book of Common Prayer with you to pray responsively.
   2. If you need a VERY easy way to pray the Daily Office, use the link to Mission of St Clare. They print Morning and Evening Prayer entirely, including the Readings for that Office.
   3. The link to the Cathedral of St Philip’s home page has a button to join the live broadcast of their celebration of the Eucharist on Sunday morning. These are live broadcasts, at 8:30 am and 11:00am. The Cathedral is shut down like all of us—they just have a couple of Priests and a skeleton choir celebrate in an empty Nave. A note to the Liturgy Geeks out there—Daily Prayer is indeed a necessary part of the Sabbath—IN ADDITION to the Holy Eucharist. Holy Communion is the principal celebration on Sunday—if you do anything on Sunday, it should be to in some way celebrate our sacramental unity with the Divine. Daily Prayer does not replace this, and thus, the Sunday Lectionary should not be used for the Daily Office. If you prefer a “Daily Prayer” experience on Sunday, and want to read the Sunday Lessons, then use the Liturgy of the Word portion of the Eucharist. More about this in a later letter.
   4. A lot of you already use the Daily Meditation from *Forward Day by* *Day.* This is a wonderful tool for use in individual and unstructured prayer.
   5. Finally, the link to *The Lectionary Page* is your source for the three Lectionaries that form a thread through our liturgical year. I will expand upon this next week, but for now, just know that you can get the Sunday readings by clicking on the calendar. There is also a link on that home page to the Daily Lectionary, but honestly it is easier just to go to St Clare’s –link above—for this. For those who pray the office a couple or more time per day, there is also the Lectionary for Lesser Feasts and Fasts (*Known now as A Great Cloud of Witnesses*).

Please try to be creative—boredom and complacency will soon become more of an enemy than a virus. Try to pray via any of the numerous meeting sites on the web with far-off family. Try to set up a daily prayer group that meets online and share the Daily Office, or any form of prayer that suits the group. You could simply call a shut-in parent and pray together once or twice a day. We are blessed by technology that enables us so many opportunities unavailable even a decade ago. I am reminded that George Washington did not see the inside of a Church for nearly six years during the Revolutionary War. No Communion, no processions, no Baptismal Font, no vestments, no Acolytes—worst of all no Vergers! Yet he surrounded himself and his country with prayer, daily and fervently. In the face of utter destruction and despair, he sought meaning and guidance from his Lord and creator, not the trappings and effects of an earthly building! God’s Peace to you all

*Alii fabri*