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Dear Fathers, Diocesan Staff, School Principals and Staff, Friends,

Greetings to you all in this Easter Week and in this time of Level 4 Lockdown, a time designed to keep us all safe from Covid 19.

This letter comes to wish you the blessings of Easter, to assure you of prayerful support and to thank you for all you are doing to keep yourselves and other safe.

Two days ago, on Easter Wednesday we read the wonderful and well-known story from the Acts of the Apostles.(Acts 3: 1-10) It is the story of Peter and John on their way to pray at the Temple, and there was a crippled man begging as he did every day. When he begged for something from Peter and John, Peter responded with these words which I always love to hear – **“I have neither silver nor gold, but I will give you what I have: in the name of Jesus the Nazarene, walk!”** (Acts 3:6)

In these days of anxiety and uncertainty, this challenging and disrupting time, a time when we may see this Lockdown as an inconvenience, please reflect on and remember those words of Peter.

Sometimes we may feel like the crippled man, begging from others, looking for support, someone to talk to, longing for a return to what we are familiar with and hoping for a return to normality. Someone will say to us, or has already said **“I have neither silver nor gold, but I will give you what I have: in the name of Jesus the Nazarene, walk!”** Those people have been the presence of Jesus for us. We give thanks for such people.

We will also at times be for others the presence of Christ. Others look to us for comfort, support, practical or spiritual help, anything that helps them to live though these days. We may at first respond as Peter did, knowing that we

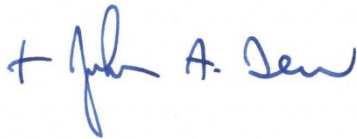


don't have money or much else to give, but also knowing that we can be the presence of Jesus to them and for them. I am aware that so many of you are already sharing hope, and the love and peace which Jesus gives us. Thank you for all you are doing and for the creative ways you are assisting others to get up and "walk" and to be for them the gift of Christ's presence.

It looks as though we may move to Level 3 before too long. There are many questions about what this will mean and who is entitled to participate in certain things, what shops and businesses will be able to be open. The uncertainty may continue for a while yet. However, please remember that the goal of all this is to keep us safe. Look after yourselves, look after one another and know that while we do not have silver or gold to give, we do have Jesus Christ.

With thanks, and with all good wishes and every blessing

Yours sincerely in the Risen Lord



John Cardinal Dew

Apostolic Administrator of the Diocese of Palmerston North

