

# THE BISHOP OF THE BAHAMAS AND THE TURKS AND CAICOS ISLANDS

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## **A PASTORAL LETTER** **FOR HOLY WEEK**

### **FROM THE RT. REV'D. LAISH BOYD**

**Bishop of the Diocese of The Bahamas and The Turks and Caicos Islands**

**Thursday, 2<sup>nd</sup> April, 2020**

Dear Anglican Family, Let us pray:

**A Prayer for The Presence of Christ** - Book of Common Prayer (BCP) page 84 #32

*Come to us, Lord Jesus Christ, in your understanding love, when all around us seems dark and uncertain, when our faith is low and we cannot feel you near, and we find it hard to pray. Come to us then, dear Lord, as you came to your disciples in the darkest hour of the night, and let the light of your presence dispel our fears, renew our trust, and bring peace to our hearts; for your tender mercies' sake. Amen.*

The government of The Bahamas has announced an extension of the National Order until April 8<sup>th</sup>. The government of the Turks and Caicos Islands has extended its Order until 14<sup>th</sup> April. These include a 24-hour curfew, suspension of gatherings, strict social distancing and staying at home. Excluded are workers in essential areas, workers in certain areas that have been given exemption, and citizens out on essential errands, e.g., grocery store or pharmacy.

These measures were entirely expected and were anticipated and even forecasted weeks ago. It is a part of the ongoing efforts to contain the Covid-19 Coronavirus and to limit its spread. It presents inconvenience and "cramps our style". It is also hard to stay at home when so many of us are used to going out every day to school, work, etc.... and having a day comprised of diverse activity and locations.

I urge all citizens and residents of our two countries to buckle down and to observe these national regulations. I urge us to endure the inconvenience and restriction now in order to avoid widespread infection and death, and to accomplish a better day in the future. I call us to accept the wisdom of the disciplines which God created – science, medicine and public health, whose advice we live by generally – and to limit our movements and interactions.

Being subject is an important part of life and of being human. Children are subject to their parents and to the principal, teachers, staff, curricula and routine of the school system. Parents are obligated to creating and to maintaining an environment for their children, and to providing for their needs until they can provide for themselves. A married couple is subject to the vows they made and to the common life they build together. When we are subject to someone or something it is not domination or a prison or something that demeans us; it is an obligation that we give ourselves to because it has a value larger than we are, larger than right now, larger than ego or desire or personal comfort or instant gratification.

Similar is our obligation to abide by the national orders: because there is a greater good, a higher goal to be achieved, and the well-being of more than just ourselves but of billions of people.

Jesus gave us a similar example in His own life. The Bible tells us in Philippians 2:6-8 that He subjected Himself: ***“He always had the nature of God, but he did not think that by force he should try to remain equal with God. Instead of this, of his own free will he gave up all he had, and took the nature of a servant. He became a human being and appeared in human likeness. He was humble and walked the path of obedience all the way to death— his death on the cross.”*** (Good News Bible) How is that for subjection, obligation, commitment, giving oneself over to a present inconvenience to accomplish a future victory?

This Sunday is Palm Sunday, when we recall Jesus entering Jerusalem as a King, knowing that some of the same people who shouted, “Hosanna!” and waved palms would be the same people who shouted “crucify him” on Good Friday, waving their clenched fists.

Palm Sunday begins Holy Week when Jesus is on the “home stretch” toward crucifixion. He passes through Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, and Holy Saturday to arrive at Easter Sunday. It must have been agonising for Him to walk that road knowing that it would end in suffering and death.

In the Garden of Gethsemane, Jesus did ask the question, ***“Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me: nevertheless not my will, but thine, be done.”*** (Luke 22:42) However, at no point did Jesus turn away from His obligation. He was subject to the Father’s mandate that He sacrifice Himself for the sins of the world and for the good of humankind, to bring us all into a closer relationship with God.

Plan to journey with Jesus this Holy Week. Follow the daily readings. Follow the Anglican broadcasts on Palm Sunday, Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, and on Easter Day. Let Jesus’ story and His saving acts touch and inspire us. There is a simple power in Jesus’ life as recorded in God’s Holy Word, the Bible.

And remember, if Jesus could be subject to what was required of Him, we are called to be subject to what is required of us, i.e., the national orders to help to safeguard us from the spread of the Covid-19, Coronavirus.

Let us pray:

**A Prayer for Strength** – BCP page 79 #2

*May the strength of God pilot us.  
May the power of God preserve us.  
May the wisdom of God instruct us.  
May the hand of God protect us.  
May the way of God direct us.  
May the shield of God defend us.  
May the host of God guard us against the  
snares of evil and the temptations of the world.  
May Christ be with us, Christ before us,  
Christ in us, Christ over us. Amen.*

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## The Readings for the Week

Sunday, April 5 <sup>th</sup>	Isaiah 50:4-9a Ps. 31:9-16 Philippians 2:5-11 Matthew 21:1-11
Monday, April 6 <sup>th</sup>	Isaiah 42:1-9 Ps. 36:5-11 Hebrews 9:11-15 John 12:1-11
Tuesday, April 7 <sup>th</sup>	Isaiah 49:1-7 Ps. 71:1-14 1 Corinthians 1:18-31 John 12:20-36
Wednesday, April 8 <sup>th</sup>	Isaiah 50:4-9a Ps. 70 Hebrews 12:1-3 John 13:21-32
Maundy Thursday, April 9 <sup>th</sup>	Exodus 12:1-14 Ps. 116:1, 10-17 1 Corinthians 11:23-26 John 13:1-17, 31-35
Good Friday, April 10 <sup>th</sup>	Isaiah 52:13-53:12 Ps. 22 Hebrews 10:16-25 John 18:1-19:42
Holy Saturday, April 11 <sup>th</sup>	Ps. 88 Lamentations 3:37-58 Hebrews 4:1-16
Easter Sunday, April 12 <sup>th</sup>	Jeremiah 31:1-6 Colossians 3:1-4 Ps. 11:8-12, 14-24 John 20:1-10

Yours in Christ,



The Rt. Rev'd. Laish Boyd  
Diocesan Bishop

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