

Hello,

For the past few weeks we have been hearing from the first letter of Peter to the Church in our Sunday lessons and I have been taking some time to study these words as part of my Covid-19 coping strategy. I have been struck by one of the commentaries which reminded me that the groups to which this letter was sent were probably not very large. If you recall that on the day of Pentecost there were a large number of pilgrims in Jerusalem from places like Cappadocia, Pamphylia etc. Well those pilgrims were likely some of the people who received Peter's letter. There were a reported 3,000 people baptized on that day which is a large number when they were all in one place but a rather small number when spread out. I found myself comparing the situation of those small isolated Christian communities trying to find their way into this new relationship with God while facing the challenges which came their way in a society that had different priorities than they had and our own small isolated home groups trying to find ways of living into this new reality brought about by a disease. I have found St. Peter's words both challenging and encouraging and so I, for one, am planning on reading the letter in its entirety at least once per week for the next few weeks and thinking about how a 2,000 year old letter still has meaning to me in this day and age. This Sunday one of my favourite portions of the letter will be part of the reading – the part which encourages the readers to “always be ready to make your defense to anyone who demands from you an accounting for the hope that is in you; yet do it with gentleness and reverence.” (1 Peter 3:15-16) Some people are having a very difficult time coping with the isolation and so they may be puzzled about those who have a fountain of hope welling up within them. Have you thought about the reasons for your hope? Would you be ready to ‘give an accounting?’ Perhaps preparing an accounting could be part of our prayer time over the next little while as we remain isolated. It might help to read through all of what St. Peter has to say in his first and second letters which have been preserved for our encouragement and growth. May God continue to show us the way forward and fill us with that wonderful hope.

Glen +

A prayer:

“Merciful God, creator of all the peoples of the earth and lover of souls, have compassion on all who do not know you as you are revealed in your Son Jesus Christ. Let your gospel be preached with grace and power to those who have not heard it, turn the hearts of those who resist it, and bring home to your fold those who have gone astray; that there may be one flock under one shepherd, Jesus Christ our Lord.” Amen. (BAS p. 312)