



Dear friends,

A few years ago I had a young student for the priesthood living with me for a six months pastoral placement. He had noticed that one of the commercial stations was airing the 'Harry Potter series' over a four week period, and, invited me to watch the series with him. I had no real interest in Harry Potter, but I sat and watched the whole series with him. I must admit I became a convert, and actually enjoyed the special effects and the story of Harry's growth from a boy into a man.

Harry, is of course a wizard with special powers, and like an adolescent he deals with the questions like: Who am I? What am I here for? How do I discern good from evil? But Harry Potter is also an orphan, and his strongest desire is to see his parents again. He looks into a magic mirror and sees them for the first time.

When the author J.K. Rowling wrote the Harry Potter series she was dealing with the grief of her own mother's death. Her prayer at the time was: '...if only I could have five more minutes with my mother.' But, as Professor Dumbledore (Principal of Harry's school) says: 'Five minutes is never enough!'

All of us, would like five more minutes to see the one we love. Maybe, to say goodbye, or say we're sorry, or tell them how much we love them.

In the gospel of John this Sunday (Jn 14: 15-21), Jesus is talking with the disciples in what is known as his 'farewell discourse.' In other words, Jesus is saying his 'goodbye' to the disciples, but reminding them that after his death: '...he will not leave them orphans, but will

send them the Spirit of truth.’ (Jn 14:18).

We are not alone, we are not orphans, we are God’s adopted children, and he loves us unconditionally. We know that it is through Baptism that we are able to draw closer to God through his Son Jesus, by the gifting of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit, the Advocate, who, Jesus says in this Sunday’s gospel: ‘...you know him because he is with you, he is in you.’ (Jn 14: 17)

In the first reading for this Sunday, Phillip in the Acts of the Apostles (Acts 8: 5-8; 14-17) converts the Samaritans and baptises them. He then calls on Peter and the Apostles to come and lay hands on them, and receive the Holy Spirit. Baptism and Confirmation are powerful Sacraments in our Catholic tradition which invite us to membership in God’s family.

During these days of separation from the worshipping community at St Mary and St Joseph, do we feel connected as God’s family through the Holy Spirit, who is living within us? Do we acknowledge our membership as God’s sons and daughters, and seek to foster that link between us which nurtures our faith life and connects us to each other through love and forgiveness? As Jesus says, it is the Holy Spirit who is in you, who is keeping you connected through our common struggle to love one another.

Yes, five minutes is never enough. But like the disciples, while we are separated physically for a time from Jesus and the fullness of His Kingdom, we believe and hope that his promise of being united here on earth, through the Holy Spirit as brothers and sisters in love, will be a foretaste of our communion which we hope to share in the eternal banquet in the Kingdom of God.

God’s blessings

**Fr Kelvin**