

Dean's Letter, 22 November 2020

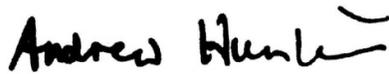
Dear Cathedral family, Brothers and Sisters in Christ

The Feast of Christ the King – also known as the Reign of Christ – which we celebrate today, marks the end of the Church's liturgical year. Next Sunday is Advent Sunday, which is the beginning of our new church year. It also marks the start of our preparation for the Feast of Christmas and the birth of Christ. We end our readings from the Gospel of Matthew today, and from next Sunday and through the year ahead, we shall be reading from the Gospel of Mark. How much we need strength and courage during these difficult days. There are times when it feels like a boxer must feel, staggering around the ring after a series of near knock-out blows. The rising rate of Covid infections and Covid-related deaths; financial pressures and crises; maintenance challenges – the wonderful rains have exposed leaks in some of our Cathedral buildings, requiring urgent attention; personal stress and anxiety leading to illness; fear and uncertainty; the sense of things crumbling around us... each of us can probably tell our own stories. And today has brought its own particular issue, news to disturb and unsettle us.

The gospel reading for today, the parable of the sheep and the goats, is a reminder that judgement those in the kingdom of heaven are those who, come the day of judgement, have shown compassion to the prisoners, the sick, the hungry and thirsty, the lonely, the naked – those in need, the powerless and voiceless amongst us. Are we people of compassion?

This coming week sees the start of the annual 16 Days of Activism against Gender Based Violence (GBV), 25th November to 10th December. GBV has been described as a second pandemic. As people of God, we are called to do all in our power to support survivors and to challenge not only the behaviour, but also the attitudes and beliefs that normalise GBV. And we hold in our hearts and prayers all survivors of GBV.

My love to you all

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Andrew Hunter". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal flourish at the end.