

# "ABSENT FROM THE BODY... PRESENT WITH THE LORD"

As we come to Holy Week it is worth contemplating some unique parallels to our current situation. The purpose of Holy Week is to look forward to the death and resurrection of Jesus. At the cross, Jesus gave up his spirit and his soul departed from his body. For three days, his corpse lay in the tomb, disembodied from his spirit. The same is true for us when we die. Paul tells us that *"to be absent from the body is to be present with the Lord"* (**2 Cor 5:8**). Theologians call this the "intermediate state", but that is not the created state. Adam came alive only when God breathed life (ie his spirit) into him.

Our hope lies in the fact that on the third day, Jesus conquered death, his spirit was rejoined to his body and he walked out of his tomb with a glorified body. This is the same hope that believers have: *"For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we shall certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his"* (**Rom 6:5**). We know that death and sin were defeated at the cross and resurrection of Jesus. Not only will we be raised to new life, but also sin has been defeated.

At this time when we are in isolation from each other, that same image comes to mind *"to be absent from the body is to be present with the Lord."* The Church is the Body of Christ and while we have been contemplating the true nature of the church without buildings, programs, traditions or whatever else we have dressed her in, one thing is for certain: it was not meant to be this way. We are meant to fellowship in body, in the flesh. The Greek word *ekklesia* means "assembly" and is used to translate the word "congregation" from the Old Testament. It is unnatural for us to be apart; we were created to be together! And our hope is that we know that we will be again one day soon.

In Christ,

Pastor Grant



## QUESTION FOR CONTEMPLATION:

During our time in isolation, when we are "absent from the Body", how can you practice being "present with the Lord"? What things distract you from being present in the Lord?