

We live in the midst of an extraordinary welter of uncertainties, highlighted today, by an, as yet, unresolved American election and the beginning here of another Covid 19 lockdown with Brexit still looming and the issue of climate change, as ever, increasingly deferred. But so like everyday life for ever, where human beings are lost in the detail of life as a way of coping with the overwhelming fact of death and limitation. And it's the day we celebrate the dedication of the Oratory of Our Lady of Peace – a still centre in all the turmoil that surrounds us. We will sing our way through the day (with all due precautions and without a public presence) not as a sign of defiance in the face of the uncontrollable events that assail us but because God is the centre of our lives. This is what we do in good times and bad. Not to gain favour or avoid falling into disfavour; not because we are better in some way than others, or even, perhaps, as an act of intercession, but because God is at the centre of all life, creator and judge. 'Where else can we go?' as the disciples famously remarked. In this sense, we are simply making ourselves present to Christ or, better, allowing and acknowledging Christ's presence to us: God's sacrament, God's way of being present to us in visible form. We don't need to celebrate Mass to make this so: we simply need to be fully present to one another, without guile, or anger, or jealousy or fear. So let us make peace now, while we can. Let us be Christ now to one another. This is the offering we make to God: ourselves, always in relation, a sacrificial gift.

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