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WE ARE THE HEART OF GOD FOR THE FUTURE: HOPE, POTENTIAL, PROMISE!

We are well into the new year of 2021 and still looking ahead to what may be. At the end of 2020 some people seemed to think that come New Year that everything would revert to “normal”, and it has not happened. Some countries are still experiencing the full force of the pandemic and it is far from over.

We have had a year of crisis with drought, bushfire and floods as have other parts of the world. We have all lived with, and still experience Covid with restrictions, lockdowns, economic downturns and social disruption. Pope Francis notes that the pandemic is not the only crisis facing the world. There are “a thousand other crises that are just as dire”. People in many places experience ongoing wars, corruption, political instability and famine, plagues and pestilence. We have the ongoing situations of hunger and deprivation, refugees, drugs, human trafficking, sicknesses of malaria, TB and cancer. Many have no access to clean water, electricity; schools or health facilities. In these experiences we are changed as individuals and as a people. We are not the same and there is no going back: **THE FUTURE CALLS US ON!**

It has been a year of crisis. A ‘crisis’ is a time of decision-making on what is the way forward. Pope Francis reflects: “The basic rule of a crisis is that you don’t come out of it the same. If you get through it, you come out better or worse, but never the same.” We need to take for granted that we will not be the same and the world situation will not be the same. We are forever changed by this crisis and “attempts at restoration always take us down a dead-end street.”

Our task is to ensure that we come out of it better, and we do this by looking to our heart. In a crisis, the Pope writes, “you reveal your own heart: how solid it is, how merciful, how big or small.” To change for the better “we have to let ourselves be touched by others’ pain. ...This is a moment to



dream big, to rethink our priorities; what we value, what we want, what we seek.” As daughters and sons of God we are all equal deserving of respect and dignity. We are called to live in unity, to dialogue and discern together, to work for the common good and the care of creation.

Pope Francis leads us to further considerations. “We need economies that give to all access to the fruits of creation, to the basic needs of life... We need a politics that can integrate and dialogue with the poor, the excluded and the vulnerable, that gives people a say in the decisions that affect their lives... to build a culture of encounter, in which we meet as people with a shared dignity.” These are global issues, which can paralyse us, but each of us can act locally in concrete situations wherever we are. To change our economic practices for a greater share of goods to a greater number; create a better political mentality of dialogue and consultation; a culture where we meet as persons and live more in harmony.



As Church to take seriously the need for ongoing reform and renewal to meet the new and changing world. We have always been called to change and move with the times and now no less and even urgently. To move with the times and the world, or simply to be left behind.

As the world moves beyond Covid we will find the opportunity to resolve the many other crisis of our time. To see others in a new light as our sisters and brothers, to care for one another and for the world in which we live. To challenge what needs to be called into questions and find new ways of living. For what is evil or wrong we are called to say, “No!” I will not live with this!



HAVE A GREAT YEAR IN 2021

**Roger Purcell msc
Director**

