

Dear Friends,

You have been much in my thoughts and prayers since I last wrote to you.

Although we have been blessed with beautiful weather and lovely birdsong, it has been hard for you all - separated from family and dear friends. It has been especially hard for those who are grieving - unable to be close to say their final farewells to their loved ones. Now, more than ever, we support each other through prayer, through every kind action, no matter how small; a phone call, an email, a wave through the window, in order to show the love we have for each other.

Throughout these difficult times, we mustn't lose hope. As our Patron, Her Majesty The Queen reminded us -

'Our streets are not empty; they are filled with the love and the care that we have for each other'.

And every day we witness that love and care we have for each other demonstrated in so many different ways. Only last month you were contacted about the urgent Appeal from MU Central. No doubt you will be wondering how the Appeal is progressing. I know that many, many of you have been most generous in contributing to the Appeal. As I write, over £482,000 has been raised. This amount is a wonderful example of the goodness and depth of love which is alive and working in our movement. Although the £1M target may seem a long way off - there is a will, a determination and most important of all, the hope to get there.

God is with us right now. His Spirit is already providing us with the strength to endure these hardships. I ask you to hold in your prayers all those who are suffering in isolation, behind closed doors - for the victims of child and domestic abuse, for those suffering from mental illness and for those hidden away -- the victims of modern day slavery. Only as the lock down eases will we know the true extent of all the suffering endured by those close by. Let us keep them in our thoughts and ask the Lord to enfold them in His Love.

It will soon be the feast of Pentecost. I firmly believe that the Holy Spirit will revitalise us, re-strengthen us and recharge us with the faith, hope and love we will need to see us all through to the end of this terrible time. And an end there will be. The tests will work and the scientists will find a vaccine - there will be an end to the isolation and all the problems and difficulties associated with it. We will come through all of this better and stronger people.

I look forward to that time when we will all come together as members, in fellowship once again. We will say our Mothers' Union Prayer together, out loud, filled with joy, hope and love. And, afterwards, we will all enjoy our TEA and CAKE together!

Be strong, my friends. We are not alone. Open your hearts and minds to the Holy Spirit and let His wonderful work begin in all of us.

Keep safe, Keep well and Keep smiling!

Rosie