

Sunday 22nd November 2020

My dear brothers and sisters,

As a new week dawns upon us, I hope that you and your families are healthy in mind, body and spirit.

Last Saturday our Hindu and Sikh friends celebrated Diwali - the Festival of Light. An auspicious occasion of a new year, prosperity and hope for the future - something which resonates with all of us. Despite everything around us being less, than normal, the media soundbites and all the hustle and bustle of daily life, I managed to take some time out and pause for a while to hear the fireworks being set off and see the terrific displays of colours in the sky. A truly magical moment and one that brought a smile to my face.

I smiled for the simple reason that celebrations must continue regardless of our ethnicity and religion. We all have in us roots and we must continue to honour our heritage and traditions for they are what have shaped us. At this difficult time, we should have the courage to step out and change things if need be but we must continue on our path. An important lesson in life is - don't let anyone hold you back. Life is too short to sit and watch it pass by Cherish the life you have. See the good around you and sprinkle a little happiness wherever you go. Only you have the power within yourself to make the changes you desire.

I will leave you with a little short story - something to mull over.

A group of frogs were travelling through the forest when two of them fell into a deep pit. When the other frogs saw how deep the pit was, they told the two frogs that there was no hope left for them. However, the two frogs ignored their comrades and proceeded to try to jump out of the pit. However, despite their efforts, the group of frogs at the top of the pit were still saying that they should just give up as they'd never make it out. Eventually, one of the frogs took heed of what the others were saying and he gave up, jumping even deeper to his death. The other frog continued to jump as hard as he could.

Once again, the group of frogs yelled at him to stop the pain and to just die. He ignored them, and jumped even harder and finally made it out. When he got out, the other frogs said, "Did you not hear us?" The frog explained to them that he was deaf, and that he thought they were encouraging him the entire time. Moral of the story: People's words can have a huge effect on the lives of others. Therefore, you should think about what you're going to say before it comes out of your mouth – it might just be the difference between life and death.

The question is 'Which frog are you?'

May you and your families continue to shine and be blessed. We remain united in our love and friendship always.

Fr Nicholas.