Recently, many of us have been living behind closed doors, and some of us still are, thanks to COVID 19. We can feel safe and protected, but after a while it can be very restricting, and we can feel cut off and lonely.

There is a famous painting by Holman Hunt of a closed door, and Jesus, with a lantern standing outside knocking, usually known as ‘The Light of the World’. Hunt painted three of these, almost identical but the one in St. Paul’s cathedral 50 years after the first for Keeble College, Oxford and on the frame is written a quotation from Revelations 3 verse 20, ‘Behold, I stand at the door and knock.’

A closer look at the painting shows that there is no handle on the outside of the door. We must conclude that the handle is on the inside, on our side, my side of the door.

Look at this door or any other closed door with which you might be familiar or a closed door in your imagination. What does it say to you? How do you feel when you look at it for a while? It might be the closed door of your church, all of them are closed at this time. How does that make you feel?

Drew Leder, in a book called, ‘Sparks of the Divine’ wrote:

“A door is a truly amazing thing. Closed it is an agent of separation.... BUT swing it open and it becomes an invitation uniting what before was separate.”

Again, during this pandemic, these words have particular significance, especially for many of us who are unable to swing open the doors at present.

Jesus declared in St. John’s Gospel chapter 10 that he is the gate/ door keeper. In Luke, Chapter 11, we hear, “Knock and the door will be opened to you.”

This is an invitation to open the door of our hearts, or to heed the knock that Jesus is making.

* Are you being asked to open the door of your heart?
* Is God inviting you to a deeper intimacy with Him?
* Are you being invited to receive some special grace and blessing?

Spend some time in quiet and stillness pondering these questions, maybe even summoning the courage to open the door of your heart, as Joyce Rupp suggests in her prayer:

“Great door of Love, assure me of your protective presence
as I wander about the landscape of my life.
When I become lost, clear a path for hope.
May every seeking footstep of mine take me through the doorway of your love.
Be my passageway today. I open the door of my heart.”

When we truly try to open our hearts to God there are unimaginable blessings awaiting us and invitations. Again, Joyce Rupp expresses this:

“Heart of Hope, you draw me to the world’s heartache.
You strengthen me when I feel frail.
You encourage me when I am downhearted.
I go now to share what you daily give me.
Thank you that I can be your channel of hope.
Once again I open the door of my heart to you. I open the door.”

A. McCarthy, May, 2020