



Pastoral Update—August 7, 2020

*"Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice!"* Philippians 4:4



*My brothers and sisters, you whom I love and long for, my joy and crown,*

What better way to begin my letter to you than with St. Paul's words that open Philippians 4? We have been apart so long now, and I miss you, family, and neighbors. It's easy to get weighed down with the tragedy, conflict, and injustice we see. So, I am reflecting on **joy** this week! I am looking for joy in unexpected places and things each day.

This photo captures joy and the sentiments of Philippians 4. There is so much we can't do right now, this photo in the park made me smile and realize we can focus on the positive and what we still *can* do. Yes, everything is different but we can make the best of it and do it in love as Jesus teaches us.

Paul goes on to tell his friends that even in the midst of hardship or challenge to think on what is true, lovely, just, commendable, pure, excellent, honorable, and praiseworthy, and God's peace will guard our hearts and our minds in Christ Jesus. Things are very different now but the most important things have not changed: our faith, our mission, our connection, our community. These are at the core of who we are and may be different now but all are still strong. It's not easy to be distant from each other, but we can find ways to inject joy into the current moment to buoy our spirits. What is bringing joy and laughter into your life right now? I'd love to hear from you @ [acain@desertcross.org](mailto:acain@desertcross.org) – let's rejoice together!

With joy,

*Pastor Andrea*