

Read Her Majesty The Queen's Address on the Occasion of her 80th Birthday-

Celebrating one's birthday is an old and deep-rooted tradition in Denmark. We celebrate it in different ways, but most people prefer to celebrate it together with family and friends.

This is also the usual way in my family. I have always looked forward to celebrating my birthday. To be able to feel, quite literally, the warm and heartfelt atmosphere that surrounds me on my birthday. It has always meant something very special to me.

This year, it has not been like that. We have had a visit from an uninvited and dangerous guest that has marked the entire country. Many celebrations, confirmations and weddings have been affected, and this is also the case regarding my birthday. Does this mean that it has been a long and sad day? No, not at all. On the contrary, the day has brought me so much pleasure and enriched me more than I can say.

I am deeply moved that so many have wished to celebrate my birthday also this year. I thank you with all my heart for the greetings, the songs and the many thoughts that throughout the day have poured in from all parts of the Kingdom.

The Danes' creativity and inventiveness have been overwhelming. Despite their own concerns and sorrows, many have taken the time to send me their birthday greetings.

Looking back, I will remember my 80th birthday as unique, one of the most memorable. Also here, it shows that when the crisis strikes, we can and will unite in our community – together, but at a distance.

Almost a month ago, I talked about the serious challenge of the corona crisis – not only to our society, but to the world at large. I made an urgent appeal to everybody to understand the seriousness of what we face. Each and every one of us is put to a severe test. Many are ill, many have lost their loved ones, and many are concerned about the future. My thoughts go to each and every one.

We live in uncertain times; but we also see that everybody is making an effort to see the crisis through and comply with the directions of the authorities – this applies to children as well as adults.

We have just celebrated Easter, and many of us have had to spend it in a different way than we are used to. This has not made the message of Easter less powerful. Also here, we have experienced being together, although separately.

But the crisis has also taught us something about ourselves that we can be proud of. We are able to do more than we think; on matters large and small, the Danes help each other from our individual places in society. There is drive, and new ideas spring forth, and we see new ways of working and being together. We have shown that we care about each other and that there is little room for selfishness. We have noticed that the lack of close human contact – and the lack of a hug – means more than we had imagined.

Much indicates that together we contribute to bringing the disease under control. We have shown that we can pull ourselves together, and that we are moving in the right direction; but now is a critical moment, for we are not out of danger yet.

It is tiresome and a nuisance to make everyday life work. It has become sad and lonely for many, especially for single and elderly people, who feel cut off from their normal life. But now we must hold on and persevere, to ensure that we all, big and small, young and old, can get through the crisis. Then we can return to a Denmark, which may well have changed, but which will, nevertheless, be the Denmark we all share – rooted in our community and trust in each other.

My birthday did not turn out the way I had imagined, but I am grateful for the way it turned out – I wish to thank all those who have contributed to making my birthday a festive and memorable day.

Now we are slowly opening Denmark again. My thoughts and greetings go once again to every single person in this country and in the entire Kingdom with my wishes for hope, courage and confidence.

GOD BLESS DENMARK