

Daily Reflection
From
Pastor Mark



Sunday
March 22, 2020

It is the first Sunday in after I have started these reflections and, I hope that all of you will take the opportunity to explore some of the online options for Worship.

You can find some suggestions for online worship resources at

www.HopeForNiagara.org/worship-online/

If you find something that you think others might really enjoy, please share it with them. You can also get that information to me by: email (mbreese@communitymissions.org), on the CMI website (www.communitymissions.org/contact-us) or on the Hope For Niagara website (www.HopeForNiagara.org/contact).

Being God's Love and Hope

For people of faith, there is an elephant in the room that, if you have not been asked about it yet, you will be. Or if not asked, you will certainly hear it expressed. It is:

“Where is God in all this Pandemic Stuff?”

There are a bunch of ways to answer that, and I promise I will be addressing some of them along the way. However for today I simply want to start with a poem that Father Stew Lindsay at Holy Family Parish in Niagara Falls sent it to me, and I am so grateful he did. The poem is written by Fr. Richard Hendrick, OFM, who lives in Ireland. You may have already seen it, but it is worth re-reading and worth sharing. Remember we each have the opportunity to **be** God's love and hope in the world. Pastor Mark

OPEN YOU HEART TO HOPE

Yes, there is fear. Yes, there is isolation.

Yes, there is panic buying. Yes, there is sickness.

Yes, there is even death.

BUT,

They say in Wuhan, China where this all began, after so many years

of noise you can hear the birds again.

They say that after a few weeks of quiet

the sky is no longer thick with fumes

but blue and grey and clear.

They say that in the streets of Assisi

people are singing to each other

across the empty squares,

keeping their windows open

so that those who are alone

may hear the sounds of family around them.

They say that a hotel in the west of Ireland

is offering free meals and delivering to the housebound.

Today, a young woman I know,

is busy spreading fliers with her number

through the neighborhood so that elders

may have someone to call on.

**Today Churches, Synagogues, Mosques and Temples are preparing
to welcome**

and shelter the homeless, the sick, the weak.

All over the world people are slowing down and reflecting.

**All over the world people are looking at their neighbors in a new
way.**

**All over the world people are waking up to a new reality to how big
we really are.**

To how little control we really have.

To what really matters.

TO LOVE!

So, we pray and we remember that Yes

there is FEAR

but there does not have to be HATE.

Yes, there is isolation

but there does not have to be LONELINESS.

Yes, there is panic buying

But there does not have to be MEANNESS.

Yes, there is sickness,

But there does not have to be disease of the soul

Yes, there is even death

But there can always be a rebirth of love.

Wake to the choices you make

As to how to live now.

Today breathe.

Listen, behind the factory noises of your panic

The birds are singing again.

The sky is clearing.

Spring is coming,

And we are always encompassed by Love.

Open the windows of your soul

And though you may not be able

To touch across the empty square,

SING.

Fr. Richard Hendrick, OFM