

During this difficult period when we can't be physically present in Church to worship together, I will send you occasional thoughts you might like to reflect on during your personal prayers. It is especially at this time that we need to redouble our efforts in praying to God that he will soon give us hope that the end of the crisis is in sight. I remember you daily in my private Mass, that God will keep you and your loved ones safe.

Fr. Frank

MUSINGS ON Covid-19 - FROM A SPIRITUAL PERSPECTIVE

The upturning of our normal world caused by the coronavirus might be a call to all of us to come to our senses and reflect on the more ultimate things in life. It might help us think about certain basic elements in our lives and our world that we take so much for granted – elements that are common-place and unseen – and, at the same time, fundamental to our existence on this Earth. One of the most basic of these is the all-encompassing atmosphere in which we live and move and have our being. Covid-19 attacks this element and we are now seeing the devastating consequences this has for our lives.

The Air We Breathe

Even a very elementary knowledge of its enormously complex nature tells us how statistically improbable it is that the atmosphere should be so finely-tuned as to support human life. Just the tiniest fluctuation in its chemical composition or density would make life on earth impossible for us humans. And yet how constant it remains; how silently and meticulously it obeys the law of its Creator. Wherever we move it accompanies us as our unseen companion. Not for even a few seconds does it leave us, for it knows how much we depend on it for our survival. Despite our ignoring it, it keeps on being there for us, continuing to serve us faithfully over the millions of years since the origin of life on our planet. And then we think of our human body, and how perfectly it is attuned to the intake of air that is pure and fresh. It's as if there's a kind of loving pact between the air and our respiratory system to ensure that our life on earth is sustained and nourished. But as we see now with Covid-19, a foreign element has intruded, and broken this pact – and with such terrible consequences! Our social world is in complete upheaval; many are living alone and frightened; 'social distancing' is so much against our natural instinct to relate with others; our economic world is in chaos; all our plans for the future are on hold, wondering when and how this crisis will end. Our top scientists are doing their best to find a remedy, but they find themselves fighting a hidden enemy that is very complex and elusive.

Where is God in all this? No one can speak definitively for God, but perhaps he is giving us a wake-up call, asking us to see how powerless we are in the face of the immense cosmic forces that govern our lives – to see, for instance, how little we can do towards arranging and fine-tuning the 110-plus elements in the atmosphere, or protecting them if they are threatened or repairing them if they malfunction. He may be warning us of the danger in thinking that the world is our world rather than his and can be controlled and manipulated for our own selfish ends.

Through this whole crisis, we are brought to see how dependent we are on a Supreme Being, the 'Lord and giver of Life' – the God who has given us the gift of life and an environment that is so friendly to our survival and growth. In giving us this planet God has given us a beautiful Home, equipped with all the basics we need for our development and well-being – light, heat, energy, water, vegetation etc. – not to mention the beauty of Nature, which adds such joy and pleasure to our lives.

And in return for all this, what is God asking of us? Simply that we would come back to him with all our heart, acknowledge him as Lord and Creator of our world and thank him for the love and care he lavishes each day on those who remain close to him. But our thanking must not be in words only; it must show itself in our willingness to follow his Law as to how we should behave in his Home.