

Bill Pollitt from Fayetteville is a good friend of mine and a big-time reader. Bill has been a font of wisdom through the years. He just happened to finish a book on the life and works of C.S. Lewis. He mentions what a gifted, talented and timeless man Lewis was. Bill shared an excerpt from Lewis' 1948 book ON LIVING IN AN ATOMIC AGE. I believe the parallels to our present moment are striking. Everywhere he writes 'atomic bomb' or 'atomic age' we could say 'coronavirus time.'

Lewis writes: "In one way we think a great deal too much of the atomic bomb. 'How are we to live in an atomic age?' I am tempted to reply: 'Why, as you would have lived in the 16<sup>th</sup> century when the plague visited London almost every year, or as you would have lived in a Viking age when raiders from Scandinavia might land and cut your throat any night; or indeed, as you are already living in an age of cancer, an age of syphilis, an age of paralysis, an age of air raids, an age of railway accidents, an age of motor accidents.'

"In other words, do not let us begin by exaggerating the novelty of our situation. Believe me, dear sir or madam, you and all whom you love were already sentenced to death before the atomic bomb was invented: and quite a high percentage of us were going to die in unpleasant ways. We had, indeed, one very great advantage over our ancestors – anesthetics; but we have that still. It is perfectly ridiculous to go about whimpering and drawing long faces because the scientists have added one more chance of painful and premature death to a world which already bristled with such chances and in which death itself was not a chance at all, but a certainty.

"This is the first point to be made: and the first action to be taken is to pull ourselves together. If we are all going to be destroyed by an atomic bomb, let that bomb when it comes find us doing sensible and human things – praying, working, teaching, reading, listening to music, bathing the children, playing tennis, chatting to our friends over a pint and a game of darts – not huddled together like frightened sheep and thinking about bombs. They may break our bodies (a microbe can do that) but they need not dominate our minds."

Bill then goes on to re-frame that last paragraph amidst the COVID-19 pandemic: "This is the first point to be made: and the first action to be taken is to pull ourselves together. If we are all going to be destroyed by a virus, let that virus when it comes find us doing sensible and human things, but with social distancing in the near term to slow it down – teaching and working remotely, reading, listening to music on Alexa, bathing the children, exercising at home, chatting to our friends with FACETIME – not huddled together like frightened sheep and thinking about viruses. They may break our bodies (a microbe can do that) but they need not dominate our minds."

Hope you are doing well – I always pray the rosary for you every day, but I've added another rosary now to pray for the end of this pandemic and for the safety of you all. I miss you – and look forward to the day when we are celebrating together again (not remotely!) We are **tremendously grateful** to those who have been faithfully sending in their offertory and other envelopes. PLEASE KEEP SENDING IN CONTRIBUTIONS – we need them to be here for you when this is over!