

I imagine that we are all getting a little (a LOT!) anxious to get back to 'normal,' whatever that is eventually going to mean. But 'ordinary time' is now very different than it was just about 6 weeks ago. The pressures of trying to work at home and home-school children are taxing – for parents and children alike. I've had several phone calls from stressed out parents and you can hear the kids in the background – I realize there is often no escape! I saw a posting from a mother who said: "For all you grandparents who are missing your grandchildren – you can have mine for 2 MONTHS when this is over!" It looks like we may have to resign ourselves to the fact that things will probably continue in this way until at least June.....

For those of us who are single, or couples who are retired, it has afforded us an opportunity for more prayer, more reflection, more regular rest, and more physical exercise (although I miss going to the gym – I'm doing my routines at home, but I don't have the same sense of accomplishment!). My work hasn't stopped or even significantly lessened (2 funerals this week and a wedding next week – all socially distanced and limited to a small group). Still making house calls for sacramental emergencies, and taking care of hospice patients. I don't have the number of interruptions that I would normally have in a given day since the office is officially closed, but I've been spending even more time than usual writing material for these postings and video messages. I'm actually grateful to HAVE to go to the office to work – it gives me a break from being at home all day by myself. And I usually see 1 or 2 staff members in a given day, so I have some human interaction besides being masked at the grocery store!

I admit that I nurse some guilt about all of this because I am only too aware how painful and fearful this time is for so many others; thousands are infected by the virus, thousands have died, millions have lost their jobs (and health insurance), millions are without money for necessities, millions now live in anxiety and fear, tens of millions are very lonely, and millions are trapped at home in domestic situations of unhappiness, abuse, and violence. ([If you struggle with any of these issues, click here to access our website that offers resources to help](#)). While I don't like my current state of life, I find myself chastised by an anonymous quote someone sent to me: *Our grandparents and parents fought in the Second World War. We are being asked to sit on the couch. We can do this!* Yes we can, but that doesn't mean we necessarily LIKE it!

It's a time when we NEED resurrection. Soren Kierkegaard once said his favorite text in the Gospels was the one where, after Jesus' death, the disciples locked themselves into a room out of fear and the resurrected Jesus had to come through the locked doors of their resistance to breathe peace into them (John 20:19-31, the gospel for Divine Mercy Sunday). Kierkegaard prayed for that to happen to him, that Jesus would come through the locked doors of his resistance and breathe peace into him. This year, we need the resurrected Christ to breathe peace into a whole world that is locked-down and needs a million kinds of peace.

This can be a good year for us to remember that at the root of the Easter message lies this: There is nothing to fear, nothing – not lock-down, not defeat, not threat, not economic loss, not sickness, not even death. The resurrection of Jesus assures us that *in the end all shall be well, and all shall be well, and every manner of being shall be well (Julian of Norwich)*; and if it isn't well.....then is still not the end. Never surrender hope! AMEN! (adapted from posting by Ronald Rolheiser, 14 April 2020)