Lent 3 A-Coronavirus

MDP of God

It’s been quite a week hasn’t it?!?!

Schools closing

Travel restricted

Quarantines

Here—*most of us thought we’re in charge of our lives*—**and the bubble has been burst**

*We’re not in control*

Life is precarious—it’s very precious (which we sometimes take for granted)—but it’s also precarious

Any day any one of us could get sick and die—any day anyone of us could have an accident and die *or have our lives changed forever*—any day we could lose loved ones through sickness or an accident

We often take our health for granted *and don’t bother to thank God for our good health*

We often times take the lives of our loved ones for granted—the health of our loved ones for granted—and don’t bother to thank God for the gift they are to us

We often times forget that everything is a gift to us from God *and that we should be filled with humble gratitude that God has been* ***so good to us***

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It’s a great paradox that the more blessings that God has given our culture—the less grateful people become

We 21st century Americans have more material blessings than any people in the history of the world

And yet fewer and fewer people worship God as the bible tells us God wants to be worshipped

We have all these incredible blessings—things that kings and queens from 200 years ago couldn’t even dream of:

Central heating—central air conditioning—indoor plumbing—more food and different kinds of food that most people in the history never dreamt of

Cars and SUVs with shock absorbers--that ride along pretty much bump free—as opposed to royal carriages of a few hundred years ago riding on bumpy roads—dealing with the tremendous heat—or tremendous cold of the day---*where we ride along in air conditioning in the summer and heat in the winter*

GPSs to lead us to our destinations

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Entertainment centers—we can hear concert quality music any day or night—we have thousands of movies and TV shows at our finger tips that can be watched any time

We have video games—the likes of which were never imaginable a couple hundred years ago

*And of course the food*—the quality and assortment we have

I remember speaking to some of our missionaries who were in El Salvador—and they were talking about some of the materials for youth ministry—one of the discussion starters was, “what’s your favorite food?”

In this country kids might answer—Big Mac’s- or whoopers—brownies or Doritos—Dairy Queen Blizzards---ice cream cake—donuts—Nestle Crunch bars—Hershey’s kisses—butterfingers—steak—chicken paprokosh—spare ribs---banana splits-ice cream Sundays---the list could go on and on

In El Salvador—every kids had the same answer to what’s your favorite food—tacos and beans—taco and beans—taco and beans

*It wasn’t much of a discussion starter*—**because those are the only foods they knew**

*And yet it seems the more God has blessed us*—**the less grateful we are**

Fewer people can bother to come to God’s house –on His day-with His people—around His altar—to receive His Body and Blood

For many people the commandments of God are no concern as they live their daily lives—*they are going to do what they want to do and no one is going to tell them what they can and can’t do*

Even to the point of destroying their children before they are born

**But now**---*the bubble has been burst*---**we’re not in control**

In the bible *we often see God allow people to have want*—**so they can become more aware of all that He’s has given them**

That’s actually what’s going on in our 1st reading today

The Israelites had been slaves for over 400 years—and God through the hand of Moses and Aaron led them to freedom—*but instead of gratitude* **they’re complaining**

“Why’d you ever take us from Egypt—we just had it so good as slaves?!?”

Of course when they slaves in Egypt—they didn’t think they had it so good

*They had already begun to take their freedom for granted*—so God allows them to suffer want

**Then He satisfies their need** –so they can once again realize how much He’s blessed them

I can’t help but think that’s what can happen in all of this Coronavirus pandemic

We’ve taken so much for granted—we’re so busy all the time running here and there—doing this and that

*Now we have no choice*—but to **not do** a lot of things we usually do—*that we often take for granted*

Because a lot of things have been canceled—a lot of us can take some time to truly reflect on all the blessings God had given

And of course there are going to be all kinds of reactions

Some people will use this as just another excuse on why they shouldn’t believe in God or shouldn’t {make quote marks with fingers} “waste any time on God”

After all they’ll say---“**what kind of God would allow this to happen?!?!?”**

The answer to that of course—“Is the God who gave us everything—The God who tells us that our time here is merely a test to see where we’re going to spend all eternity”—the God who tells us, “*That the time we have here is nothing but the blink of an eye when it comes to our existence*—**and that everything in this life is an opportunity to grow in virtue**—an opportunity to die more to ourselves and live for Him—to let go of the things of this world so we can set our hearts on the life that really matters---that is the life His faithful people will share with Him in heaven”

Like the Israelites in our 1st reading my friends—a lot of time we take for granted all the incredible blessings God has given us

As we face this crisis—there will be some who are really angry at God *because He’s burst their bubble*—they thought they were in charge of their lives—{Pump fist toward heaven**}-“How dare you allow this to happen to me”**

Or we can use this time to contemplate all the blessings God has showered upon us—blessings that we often take for granted

My friends, let’s take these weeks of lent—*which this year correspond to the Coronavirus restrictions*—let’s take this time to contemplate all the gifts we’ve been given

Let’s with hearts full of gratitude spend time in heartfelt prayer praising the God who has blessed us so abundantly—*with the blessings of this world*---**but more importantly**—has blessed us with His Son Jesus and the hope of salvation

God bless you