

## Coronavirus and Lent

It is truly amazing and even unsettling, to see how quickly the Coronavirus has spread through our land. From one marketplace in China, moving through Asia and the Mid-East and Europe, then to a few cases in distant Washington State two months ago—it has now become the daily preoccupation of all of us. The spread has been insidious, and it has changed our lives. Life itself—and all our regular routines—have been halted. We are confused, fearful, and not sure when things will get back to normal.

It might give us an insight into the insidious spread of sin. While you have time on your hands, read again the first eleven chapters of the Book of Genesis. You will see that God created and handed on to us an excellent world, where everything tended toward the good. God's Will was in charge, and living was as care-free as a stroll in a garden.

That is, until Eve had a "better" idea. Listening to the Evil One, she second-guessed God's commands—and sin entered the world. Sin, as we know, it is the separation from God and God's Will. The results were tragic. Eve and Adam lost their easy life, and thenceforth has to struggle to survive in the world. And this first separation from God multiplied itself over and over. Murder came in early, as Cain kills his brother Abel out of jealousy. By chapter 6, evil has spread so far and wide that God regrets ever creating man. Noah builds his ark, and just a handful of humans survive the flood, to start out all over again. But then by chapter 11, pride had made men think that they could out-smart God by building their own tower back to heaven. It doesn't turn out as planned. Sin and its effects had created an on-going separation between men and their Creator.

I am not suggesting that this virus is a punishment from God for sin. But I am saying that we need a remedy from sin as much as we need a remedy from the C-virus. We listen to the daily briefings of the governors and the president, who are trying their best to help us through this. They offer their suggestions of social-distancing, continuous washing, and closing down schools and businesses. And to the extent that we follow these practices, the virus will be overcome--we hope.

In the same way, the Church teaches us that the Season of Lent is a remedy for the sinfulness that the world finds itself in. To the extent that we co-operate with God and change our ways, and practice prayer and fasting and charity to others—the sin in our lives can be overcome. In fact we find that Lent is actually God's gift to us, to help us return to that Paradise that was lost by sin.

May we continue to observe Lent seriously, and work to come closer to the Lord and to overcome our faults. May we offer up all the crosses which this virus is thrusting upon us as sacrifices to the Lord. May we continue to pray to the Lord for relief from this plague among us.

Sincerely,  
Father Wayne