

Fr. Rojas G. Juan, **Coronavirus (COVID-19): A Message of Hope and Trust in a time of uncertainty rooted in Holy Scriptures** (St. Stephens, Kearny, 2020).

**Due** to COVID-19 today our world and our country, what we love and value so much, our homes and jobs, our kids and elders have been put in great danger. And for the stronger generation, even our own health has been compromised. Some even said: “**Fr. mark your history books with this event because in the modern days it has never happened before,**” which sounds even more scary.

So indeed, we are going through a **challenging time**. The large majority may feel hopeless and afraid. Actually, when you look at the news it seems like there is no way out. It’s all bad news. The entire world seems to be collapsing. The hospitals, the economy. And yet, the government trying to prevent this rapid spread, now has established more serious *regulations and new laws* regarding, airports, malls, restaurants, gyms and so on. Even our own churches are not considered safe places for prayer and adoration.

However, the questions that reminds for us here are, what’s going to happen next? Could we overcome this, and if it is so, how and when? Unfortunately, the answer to these questions still remain unknown to us.

Nevertheless, it is here, in the midst of this world crisis, and in our natural search for *survival*, that a lot of us may try to “**be ready**” for the coming events. So, we take the next step, which is going to the supermarket and pharmacy and get as much food, water and medicine supplies that we may need. And yet, it is here where **we are called** to calm down, to be charitable with those who are also trying to do the same, and especially, to trust in God, to be a generation of faith.

**Remember**, our **faith proclaims** that **we are not alone**. God has never left us alone. In the OT (Old Testament), Abraham, our father in the faith, proclaimed that **God will provide**, and so instead of Isaac his son, there was a lamb for the sacrifice (Gn. 22:8). In time of hunger and thirst, God also provided for his people manna from heaven and water from the rock in the desert (Ex.16-17). In the NT (New Testament) the same theology of God providing for his people is carried out with a strong emphasis on Jesus, the Lamb of God (Jn. 1:29). When the people were hungry, Jesus multiplied the loaves and fish for all, everyone was fed and there were twelve baskets leftover (Mt. 14: 13-21). To his disciples he promised, “*I am with you always, to the very end of the age*” (Mt. 28:20). And it is at the cross, where the Father provided, in Jesus, the purest sacrifice to satisfy the hunger and thirst of the world burdened and grieved by sin (1 Pet. 2:24-25). **Our faith also proclaims** that, “*He [Jesus] is the cornerstone*” (Mt. 21:42; Eph. 2:19-22). “*He is the head of the body, the Church*” (Col. 1:18). “*He holds in his hands the depths of the earth*” (Ps. 95:4). And Jesus, who is the “[true] *light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it*” (Jn. 1:5). In other words, his authority and power stand over every living creature without limits.

Now, **today** in the midst of this world crisis, **our hope is reaffirmed**. Among many other passages in the NT (Jn. 11:1-45; Mk. 4:39), the Gospel of John today, presents us a clear example of **Jesus’ authority and power over human nature**. A man born blind who recovers his sight (Jn. 9:1-41).

His own people could not even believe that he had regained his sight. So, the tension between the people and the pharisees looking for an answer, by *summoning* the man twice and even his parents, tells us that indeed it was something beyond human nature, beyond their understanding. There was no physician or even a magical intervention, but rather the power and authority of Jesus over nature.

So again, today, in this time of uncertainty, the **same question** in our Gospel is extended to us as well: “**Do you believe in the son of man**” (Jn. 9:35)? Do we truly believe that Jesus is the alfa and the omega, the beginning and the end (Rev. 22:13)? The light of our world (Jn. 8:12). The one who proclaim good news to the poor, freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, who set the oppressed go free, the source of every healing (Is. 61:1; Lk. 4:21-30)? Because if it is so, **our trust** must be set on Jesus, our true Lord and Savior.

Finally, let us together entrust in God’s hands our country, our world, especially those who have lost their lives, those who are sick. Let also, entrust in God’s hands our government, together with the many men and women who risk their lives every day helping others and trying to end this world crisis.

**St. Patrick, and St. Joseph.... Pray for us. Amen.**