

Dear Parishioners of Saint William of York,

Please forgive me. I ask you that in advance because I don't consider myself a writer and I feel awkward doing this, but I wanted to write you something during this unprecedented time of challenge for all of us. To myself I keep calling this "The Coronavirus Duration."

The world is sick, the whole world. It's confused and afraid. We are experiencing an unprecedented historical event, and as we are it helps me to remember that Jesus Christ, King of Kings and Lord of Lords, is *the* Lord of History.

There's something else it helps me to remember: *Remember you are dust, and to dust you shall return.* I always forget, but now I can't. The world is so big but I'm so small, so small that now I'm becoming preoccupied with possible droplets of virus in the air, on my clothes, everywhere.

Feeling small and vulnerable, closing down "life as we knew it," "the world as we knew it," is no mere expression anymore. It's a new reality. It came upon us so slowly and so quickly it seems, all at the same time.

It's benefited me already to feel small, to feel vulnerable and to remember that I am dust. It's awakened me again. This morning at *Morning Prayer* the familiar words of *Psalms 90* reminded me of so much.

*You turn men back to dust*

*and say: 'Go back, sons of men.'*

*You sweep men away like a dream,*

*like grass which springs up in the morning.*

*Our life is over like a sigh.*

*Our span is seventy years*

*or eighty for those who are strong.*

*Make us know the shortness of our life*

*that we may gain wisdom of heart.*

"I am 68 years old," I thought to myself. I always wanted that wisdom of heart. I want it, need it, now more than ever and so I continued to pray:

“Lord, grant me that wisdom of heart only you can give me. Help me to be the pastor you want me to be now. Help me to rise to this occasion. Grant me wisdom of heart. Help me to remember.”

In closing, dear Parishioners of Saint William of York, I send you my blessing now, through the air. May God grant you a restful night

With kindest regards and prayers for all of you, I remain,

Faithfully yours in Christ,

Father DeMartino