



**What we can learn from the Corona crisis:**

## **An Experience of our Mortality**

*The sudden outbreak of the Corona crisis has changed our private and public lives dramatically. Many things that were taken for granted and many certainties have been shaken: the workplace, school and day-care centres for children, freedom of movement, full shelves in the supermarket... We have realised that many things in our lives are precarious. No one can tell us what the future will bring.*

*As Christians who know that God is present in all situations, we ask ourselves questions. What does God want to tell us through these experiences? What could we learn from the coronary crisis?*

*We want to reflect on this in the four weeks of the ecumenically celebrated Creation Time. Our society usually suppresses the thought of death. The corona crisis forces us to think about it. In christian tradition there is much that reminds us of death and transience: the ash cross at the beginning of Lent "Remember that you are dust"; the prayer at the end of each funeral, which is shocking for some: "We pray for the next one among us who will die". Easter and every eucharistic celebration reminds us of the death but also the resurrection of Jesus and gives us the hope that death does not have the last word.*

### **Quotes**

This dramatic situation has reminded us a how vulnerable, fragile and in need of salvation we human beings are, and it has questioned many certainties.

Pope Francis

This is a pandemic, a crisis that concerns everyone (pan demos – All the people), each individual

and the whole of society. For everybody, it means an sudden interruption of their previous lifestyle, habits and many everyday certainties that we take for granted. Cardinal Walter Kasper

In the liturgy, Holy Saturday is the day of the burial of God, who often remains hidden and silent in the history of mankind... But Holy Saturday promises us that Jesus, in his death, went into this kingdom of death to bring the presence of God and his love into this kingdom. Cardinal Kurt Koch

We do not have everything in our hands, but we are in God's hands. George Augustine

Wonderfully secured by good powers, we confidently expect what may come. God is with us in the evening and in the morning and certainly on every new day. Dietrich Bonhoeffer

*We know that the whole creation has been groaning as in the pains of childbirth right up to the present time....For the creation was subjected to frustration, not by its own choice, but by the will of the one who subjected it...Rom 8,22.20*





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## **An Invitation to live in Solidarity**

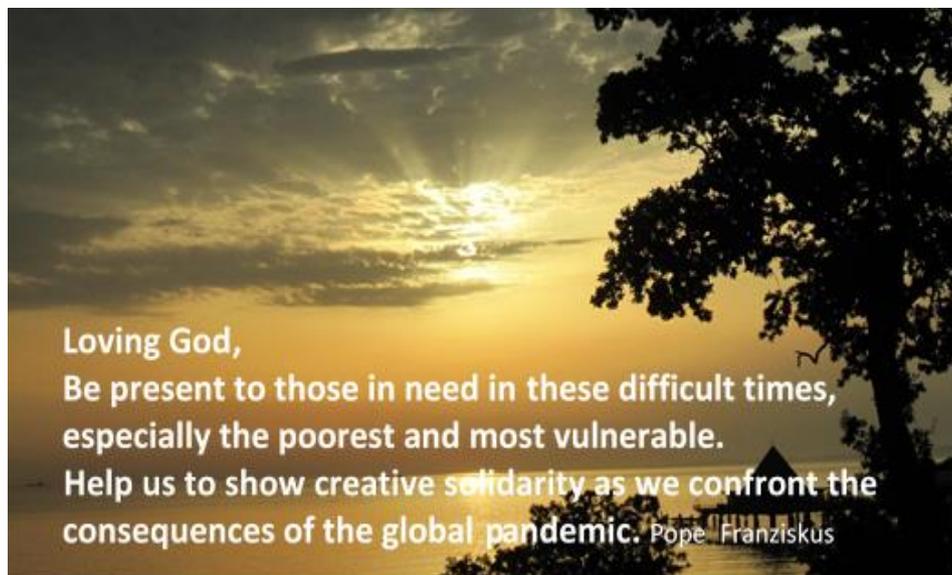
*Crises can bring out the best and the worst in people. The Corona crisis has triggered an unexpected solidarity. Doctors and nurses, pastoral and social workers risked their lives in the service of the infected. Other professional groups made it possible to maintain public services. Neighbours helped neighbours. Countries helped particularly affected neighbouring countries with material, personnel and free intensive care beds. Almost all people of all generations were prepared to accept painful restrictions of their freedom in order to protect their own lives and those who are more at risk .*

*The great challenge is to continue to live this spirit of solidarity in our own lives and in our society. Everyone has been committed to tackling the crisis: Christians of all churches, Muslims and people without religion. This experience invites us to live a greater "ecumenism" and to work together for a more just and humane future, not only in the Corona crisis, but also in addressing the many other major problems of humanity together, regardless of religion or belief*

### **Quotes**

But the amazing thing is that the inner resources of strength and human greatness, the ability to rise above oneself, are revealed, which generalizes negative judgments about today's world and today's youth. The experience that there is more in people than we often think, gives rise to the hope that we urgently need.

Cardinal Walter Kasper



It is worth noting that during the Corona crisis many good and positive things also come to light. It has become clear that we humans are all dependent on each other, that we are all in the same boat, and that we are called upon to support each other and especially those who are particularly affected by the Corona crisis. Cardinal Kurt Koch

We witnessed... heroic solidarity and sacrifice in the service of the sick and the threatened. It is precisely in these expressions of love - whether in activities of "believers" or of "unbelievers" - that something sacred and unconditional has been revealed. There something was revealed. That we Christians call "God"... Let us develop an ecumenism whose aim is to understand humanity as one family (as children of one father) and the world as one common house. Tomáš Halík

*God has shown you, O mortal, what is good.  
And what does the LORD require of you?  
To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God.  
Michah 6,8*



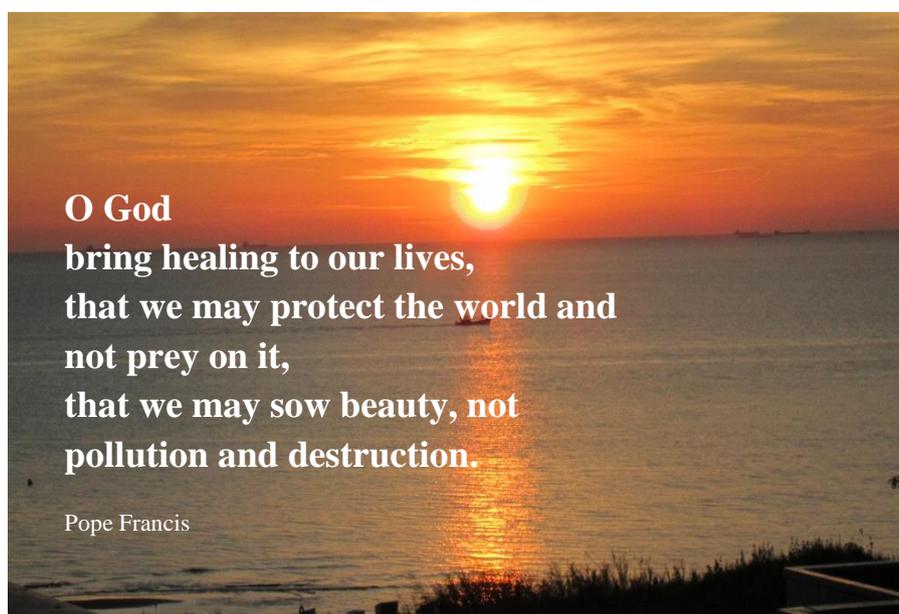
**What we can learn from the Corona crisis:**

## The End of many (collective) Illusions

*The tremendous developments in science and technology over the last centuries have enticed us to believe in unlimited progress and to imagine that through science and technology all problems can be solved. This belief gave us a feeling of security. The uncontrollable, tiny virus that ignores all social and political boundaries can be life-threatening for anyone anywhere and at any time. Corona has brought to light many social upheavals and shattered our belief in endless economic growth. We are gradually becoming aware that an excessive exploitation of nature in the name of progress is slowly but inexorably destroying our livelihoods. Many dogmas of modernity prove to be an illusion. The Corona crisis is a call for conversion, for rethinking. We must rethink our relationship with nature, our wasteful lifestyle and our entire economic system. Corona is a foretaste of greater catastrophes in the future.*

### Citations

Before our eyes  
the system that makes our  
modern way of life possible...  
collapses suddenly.  
The crisis uncovers,  
what in our world was not in  
accordance. We do not know  
yet, how long this crisis will  
last. But what we should  
know, is that we must not  
return to the old normality  
after the crisis. George Augustine



The consequences of the Corona crisis are probably best comparable to those of the devastating earthquake in Lisbon in 1755...but we know that the devastating quake deeply shocked and changed the whole culture and enlightened philosophy of that time. The quake meant the end of the Enlightenment's optimism and belief in progress... The Corona crisis will also cause shock waves to our civilizational, societal, social and cultural certainties, consequences that even today hardly anyone can foresee in detail. Cardinal Walter Kasper

The corona pandemic is not only a medical problem, but a huge landmark in the history of the modern world. The coordinate system that determines the present, the entire structure of politics, economy, society, culture, religion and personal existence is being shaken. Holger Zaborowski

The gravity of the ecological crisis demands that we all look to the common good, embarking on a path of dialogue which demands patience, self-discipline and generosity, always keeping in mind that "realities are greater than ideas". Pope Francis LS201

*"Jerusalem, Jerusalem, you who kill the prophets and stone those sent to you, how often I have longed to gather your children together,.... Look, your house is left to you desolate. Mt. 23,37-38*



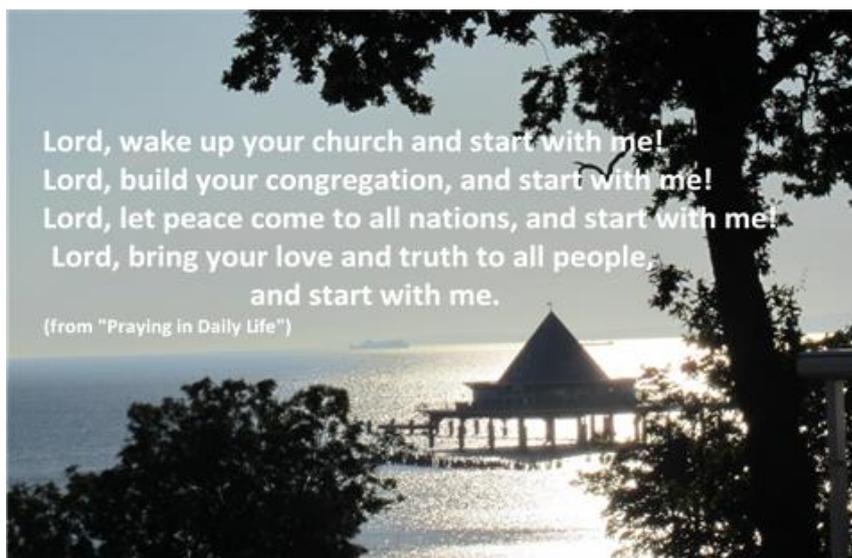
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## A Chance for the Church

*Pope Francis on Good Friday in front of the deserted square of St. Peter's, deeply immersed in prayer in front of the Roman plague cross, is an image we will not soon forget. Celebrating Easter in front of closed churches was also a completely new experience. But even before Corona, our churches became increasingly empty. The younger generation was absent at Services. More and more churches were desecrated, sold and converted into homes or supermarkets; centuries-old monasteries were transformed into homes for the elderly. Are these signs of the times and what does God want to tell us? With the destruction of the temple, the people of Israel in exile had to learn that God is not found in buildings, but lives in their own hearts and is with them in their community. They had to find new ways to understand and live their faith. The family became a centre for prayer and worship. Is the church in Europe not facing a similar challenge? With falling church taxes and donations, how long can we continue to finance our catholic institutions and the enormous church bureaucracy? We need new ways of being a church, a church perhaps more like the early church in Jerusalem, where prayer, eucharistic celebration and communal meals took place in the houses and the "laity" with their various charisms took responsibility for pastoral needs and for the proclamation of the Gospel..*

### Quotes

Perhaps the time of locked churches shows up symbolically their hidden emptiness and their possible future that could come about if the churches do not seriously try to give the world a completely different form of Christianity... Let us not forget that in many areas the church survived for centuries without priests. Perhaps this "state of emergency" is only an indication of a new form of the Church, of which there have been precedents in history. Tomás Halik



Lord, wake up your church and start with me!  
Lord, build your congregation, and start with me!  
Lord, let peace come to all nations, and start with me!  
Lord, bring your love and truth to all people,  
and start with me.  
(from "Praying in Daily Life")

Every crisis is an opportunity to dare to look for something new. The Corona crisis... has led us as a church to discover digital space as a place of proclamation, worship and catechesis. The virus has done something that a dozen papal encyclicals... have not achieved: We are becoming missionary... We are approaching people with new ideas and in new ways to help them and to proclaim the Christian message of God's love. Karl Waller

There are two images of the church: the missionary church, which goes out of itself..., and the glamorous church, which lives in itself, from itself and for itself. Bergolio at the Conclave

*No one pours new wine into old wineskins. Otherwise, the new wine will burst the skins, and it will be spilled, and the skins will be ruined. Rather, new wine must be poured into fresh wineskins. [And] no one who has been drinking old wine desires new, for he says, 'The old is good. Lk 5,37-39.*