

Column080220

Companions on the Journey

August 2, 2020

Dear Friends in Christ

There are so many things that we do not know but most of the time that does not bother us so much because we don't think that we should have to know a lot of those things. But this coronavirus is different. There are things that we know, or think we should know, that we just flat out do not know. There are things we have now been thinking about that we have not thought about before or not thought about in a long time.

We do not know where we are going with this. We do not know personally and we do not know as a nation. And we do not know as a world. We really have no idea how this covid19 is going to unfold over the next weeks and months. The ordinariness of our routines has been upset and not replaced. The things we usually turn to for distraction or relief or release are often not there, or not in the same way. Sports? Not existent for months. Going shopping? Some of us haven't been in a grocery store or a merchandise store for months. The drive to work? What drive to work. The interaction with our fellow employees? What interaction? Zoom? Are you kidding me? Getting together for a bite to eat with family and friends? How long has that been?

We have found some avenues especially within family gatherings and living. There have been some new developments in terms of family meals and doing things together as a family. And enjoying time together where before we did not so much enjoy because we were driven to do whatever was up next—the next appointment, the next practice, the next session, the next one on one.

May I make a suggestion? The last two years the children in our Children's Faith Formation program who were in preparation for reception of sacraments—First Reconciliation, First Communion, Confirmation—all received Children's Bibles. These Bibles are quite good. There is so much more than just the text of each Book of the Bible. There are breakdowns of passages. There are illustrations. There are some brief explanations. There are applications of the teaching Jesus offered or the prophets. My suggestion is that you dig the Children's Bible out from under whatever was placed on top of it hiding it from view. Open to one of the four gospels—Matthew, Mark, Luke, or John. (My favorite is Luke. He was a doctor and so much of what Jesus did to heal people is highlighted in Luke's gospel. A lot of healing. And we are in a time when healing of our wounds and brokenness is exactly what we need.)

Open to one of the gospels and read a short passage with one or more of your kids. Then ask them what they think it means or ask them if they have any questions about the passage. If not, move on to the next passage. If they have a question or two, or if they have an observation then that is the beginning of a discussion between you and your children about the meaning of the Word of God. I assure you, you actually know more of it than you realize. Especially the gospels. But the discussion with your kids about God and life—that will be something memorable. Do a little preparation. Work at it. Your kids can handle this. You can too. And even if you have no children or are widowed or widowered you can do this too. Or if you are married. You can do this with your husband or wife. I know it will be awkward or unusual but this whole Covid19 has been so unusual and awkward that this will not be over the top at all. Reading the Word of God in your homes and sharing it with another family member. Maybe it hasn't been a part of your life til now. Why not start and make it a routine? What have you got to lose? Very little. And to gain, a great deal. Think about it.

Peace,
Monsignor McHenry