



Who did you see along the way?

How did you feel along the way?

Who did you 'meet' along the way?

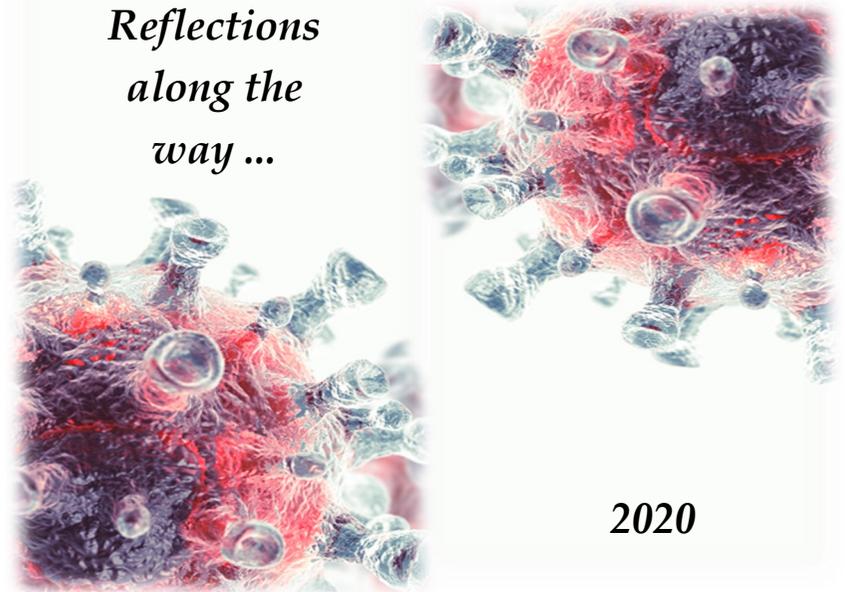
What did you hear along the way?

Where did you 'go' along the way?

What did you taste along the way?

What questions did you ask along the way?

*Reflections
along the
way ...*



2020

What did you feel along the way?

As summer disappeared and autumn made an abrupt entrance in Melbourne, so too did the reality of lock-down and the messages of 'keep safe - stay at home'. At first I thought I was well prepared for going into lock-down - I recalled my experiences of silent 30 days retreats, my experiences of months confined to a hospital room. If I survived those times, then staying at home in my own environment was going to be much easier.

However these days, these times have taken a different path. There have been days when I have thought I am over this - days when I have wanted to see a different vista, days when I haven't wanted to hear another mention of corona virus, days when I have pined to see people face to face.

On the other hand though, there have been wonderful gifts at the local level. Our street has changed - not just the changing of the autumn colours and the trees shedding their leaves , but the getting to know our street community. Marg and I have had gorgeous, companionable days of being able to sit out for lunch amidst the autumn light and deepest, richest colours, whilst neighbours have paused for a chat over the fence.

A WhatsApp was started and suddenly everyone knew the names of those who lived behind the doors. We came out into our driveways to farewell and send off our 97-year-old neighbour who was going into care, having lived in the street for 57 years. We came out into our driveways pre-dawn on ANZAC Day and stood in silence to listen to the last post and to glimpse the flickering candles along the road.

Another day saw Marg and Angela making cupcakes to hand deliver to street households, where home schooling was taking place. It is these events that are staying with me - the standing in solidarity with one's neighbours, plus the many, many acts of kindness and the ordinary gestures of saying hello to those one passes in the street. These have been the religious experiences for me, rather than hearing words preached from a pulpit.

Mercia Richards

What did you ask along the way?

The recent recommended article by Joseph Camilleri is excellent. He concludes: *In Australia, as elsewhere, the current emergency presents us with a rare opportunity to reinvigorate the national conversation and breathe new life into our institutions – not just political but economic, cultural and educational.*

Well might he have added *religious* to the list of institutions, and in particular our own Catholic Church. For 'what I felt along the way' is a growing discomfort with the reports that our church leaders might be tempted to take a *business as usual* approach if and when this is over.

We began the Plenary 2020 process with great hope and courage and responses from the Discernment phase have held attention. Just this week we have learnt that with dates set for later 2021 and 2022 there will be time to look at the lessons inviting consideration through the lens of Covid-19. A welcome pause indeed.

I felt wonderful gratitude for the creative and imaginative liturgical responses over these months: the online liturgies from our schools; *Pray as you Stay* from the British Jesuits; the stunning Andrea Bocelli video from Milan; *The Field Hospital Exercises* from Michael Hansen and the First Spiritual Exercises team and the imaginative Zoom choirs and performances. All opportunities to be in the presence of our God.

So I wonder if we can reinvigorate the national conversation about Church? Can we discern these unchartered signs of the times, might we think about the rehabilitation of our Church and its members?

Is this moment a God-given opportunity for the long overdue reform of our structures and practices in the post Covid-19 world?

Sandra Perrett



What did I see along the way?



Over the past weeks and months, our Korean CJ sisters, Sophia and Albina, have taken their English classes online. At each of their break times they shared with us what they had learnt – sometimes



something we didn't know ourselves! Grammar is a big part of each lesson and we were indeed kept on our toes regarding *present perfect* and various other tenses.

It brings back memories of Mothers Benignus, Dominic, Nuala and other famous women of Loreto Toorak. And, of course, Mother Joseph of St. Peter and Paul's – *no such thing as bad grammar – only grammar used incorrectly!*

When Sophia and Albi are not online, Yvonne, Jan and Marg all help with the homework. They cook our dinner twice a week – delicious Korean food which is so tasty. Our Thursday and Saturday evening prayer times are enlivened by their presence and beautiful singing voices.

We are very fortunate to watch the world go by on Sydney Harbour and one can never be bored while such a view continuously inspires us.

Susie and I took up Robin Scott's invitation to type up material from the Archives. We completed the Albert Park Visitation Book and also the Kimberley. It was fascinating to recognise the handwriting of M. Gonzaga Barry, M. Columbière, M. Pauline Dunne and M. Agnes Walsh.

Lockdown came and hopefully it is on its way now!

Claire Gardiner

What did I see along the way?

Here in James Milson Village I have noticed the effects of the shut down in other residents as tables in the dining room are restricted to 2 rather than 4. Some friends are thus isolated and try to make contact by raising their voices.

Some residents sit near the front door hoping to see their regular visitors arrive.

I have noticed that some have changed their behaviour towards others e.g. a man at a nearby table is more caring of his female companion, another is noticing new fruit arriving and getting some for a neighbour. Yet another raises his voice to reach a more distant table to share news.

In the evening, and often when I return, I am especially grateful for the care I receive and for those who make it possible.

I am more aware of the needs of the elderly and pray for other needy people such as migrants and the oppressed (including victims of abuse). May we all live to enjoy and help bring about a better world for all after this pandemic is ended.



I am grateful for the ability to listen another's communication which has no meaning to me except that it allows the speaker to unburden something needful for her.

Genevieve Davey



*The grass withers, the flower fades,
but the word of our God will stand forever. Isaiah 40:8*

What did I see along the way?

Falling leaves of golden glow, each carrying a message of life lived thus far: they fall, are gathered, are spread to nourish the tree from which they came.

For me the circle of life is manifested in the season of Autumn with Covid 19 being a visitor this year.

Over tea and scones what did we say.....What did I hear.....?

What questions did I ask....? Where did I go....? Whom did I meet.....?

For me Covid 19 has been a welcome visitor with time to reflect, to be still, to sift through the memories of my life, a blessed time, a prayer time, a questioning time, a "remote" contact time, a letter-writing time, a slowing down time, a grateful time, an unrealistic time, but one I have welcomed.

In normal times I visit two elderly parishioners, one in a nursing home the other in an Aged Care facility. I have observed during the visit of Covid 19 quite different responses from these ladies. The lady living by herself has a good family who support her, yet she has been desperately lonely, I have kept in touch by phone, letter-writing and dropping little homemade food packs at her door, she responds with gratitude. The one in the nursing home is from Goa and has no family at all in this world. A sad lady indeed but strangely in this pandemic is not so worried as the one who has family. She is secure and safe and well cared for and has staff and residents to keep her company. This made me reflect on our own community, in particular those living alone, what have I done what am I doing?.....I read a quote from Pope Francis the other day....

Look at the real heroes who come to light in these days they are not famous, rich or successful people.....they are those who are giving themselves in order to serve others

His Easter message of hope..."it is the hope of a better time in which we can be better..."

I still need to keep reflecting.....over tea and scones.



Marg Sculley

Where did you go along the way?

Physical distancing has provided a challenge these past weeks. It definitely affected our ability to visit our elderly sisters and this was dramatically highlighted when Bern Gray was dying. While Bern was reserved, she appreciated visits, however she was understanding of the restricted situation the second to last time I was able to visit. Towards the end it is not easy to know if our visits would have made any difference for her, but the inability to do so, certainly was a problem for me. My problem.

Despite the fact that it has curtailed a few activities, such as trips to the local library and normal shopping, it was the perception of lack of freedom or choice, that I believe for me, had a greater impact. Verna and I have been fortunate in that we have been able to continue with gym, twice a week, at Carmelite and I have augmented this with a walk to and through Tusmore Park on non-gym days. At first, autumn was just beginning and the leaves on the footpaths leading to the park were yellow and soft pinks and they made a carpet along the path. Then over the weeks they have deepened and now are dark crimson. When the rain came they turned to slush which the council cleared, but now the last fall of leaves, again brightens the paths.

In the first weeks I saw mothers, wheel young children in strollers or walk slowly beside little ones learning to balance on their wheel-less bikes, then mothers with older children who played in the dry creek bed. I watched Phil Moller's (SJ) mother with her two grandchildren lifting rocks across to the side of the creek, dismantling the "dam" other children had erected. A few days later after the rain, I saw children paddling in the creek bed behind the re-erected dam. Lately I have observed fathers congregating in the park with young children during the day, a happening, unheard of in "normal" times.

Before this physical dislocation and school closures, one part of the park has been “reserved” for dog owners to come together to allow their dogs off leash and to socialise with each other - both dogs and owners. Unfortunately for dogs and their owners, senior primary/ junior secondary lads weren’t aware of this informal arrangement and took over the field for football. Lately it has also become a meeting place for young bike riders.

On my walk through the park, I saw that the dogs and their owners have taken back ownership of “their” oval while the children occupied the top areas and the playground. As it was just before sunset, one parent called to the children that it was the last kick which triggered an almighty tantrum. Kids are the same everywhere.

Now that school has resumed and restrictions eased, a walk in the park is going to be different.



Diaan Stuart

A time to feel

So privileged.

Without stress of domestic violence;

With no anxiety of rent, employment or mortgage;

Always somewhere, knowing the company of friends;

Knowing no one in my immediate circle infected.

Inhabiting a bubble of privilege.

Left to ponder

The fate of the asylum seekers on Nauru; Manus;

The men in the Mantra Motel in Melbourne – cooped up.

Deafening silence from those in power.

What is happening to them?

Article by Timothy Radcliffe in a recent Tablet.

lockdown in the monastery has its moments too –

he recalls advice of Abba Moses, a Desert Father:

“Sit in your cell; your cell will teach you everything”.

I feel I understand partially what it means;

Something in it resonates.

I find myself pondering it almost daily.



Jane Kelly

In Time of Pandemic

A time to see

Streets emptied of traffic and clearer skies;
Autumn leaves thick on the ground and children playing in them;

Hopscotch drawn in chalk on pavements;
Bears in windows waiting to be counted;
Children playing watched over by parents: on bikes, tricycles and scooters;

Neighbours talking, one to another, over fences;
The courtesy of strangers observing social distancing; smiling in greeting as they pass;
The relief to hear politicians speaking across party lines for a while.

A time to delight

In the imaginations of others expressed through song; dance; words; zoom.

Artists, medicos, workers sharing harmonies free;

In the homeliness of backgrounds as serious people/experts/
musicians/ artists/ all sorts of people shared from their own home spaces;

Gifts offered gratuitously via the internet or for a trifling sum.

A time to experience anew

Eucharist – shared in simplicity and at depth;
Breaking open the word differently;

The unexpected intimacy of spaces ‘zoomed’
Question: where is the spirit leading us in this re-imagining of experience?

Knowing no one in my immediate circle infected.
Inhabiting a bubble of privilege.

COVID - 19

There is much in life that is uncertain and it is likely that too much certainty will insulate us from the demands of reality.

(Michael Casey "GRACE on the JOURNEY to GOD")

The uncertainty of the present and the act of social distancing has, we think, created a deeper concern for each other and sense of community. This has been very evident here in the Village.

When all communal areas closed, our floor (12 people) found ways to connect and recreate. Easter Sunday morning we all came out into the corridor with our cups of tea, chatted, laughed and sang 'till 8 of us went off "to Mass"; a broadcast from St. Mary's Sydney. We have gathered in like manner several times since to celebrate birthdays - with a glass of wine instead of tea!



The Residents' Committee organised various ones to phone the more vulnerable to check all was well. The 95 year old (Nonie) whom we call loves a chat and another talks for about half an hour each time! Management has been incredible and inspirational in their care and concern; a staff member on duty 24/7. Cleaners and carers have been allowed in but must report to Administration for a temperature check before entry. "On-line" deliveries come to the same area and a staff member transfers them to the units.

Although closed, the Village Bistro provides "take-away meals" plus vegies, fruit, bread, milk, butter - even toilet paper!! Members of staff also check by phone that we are O.K.

We have both enjoyed the peace and quiet.

Zita and Helen S

CANA Reflections

We learn from people long ago.
They danced around a Common Maypole
To celebrate the month of May.
Young, we danced the night away.
Now we can only dance alone,
Apart, together on multi-techno screens.

Back then May Baskets, 'survival packs'
Were placed in secret at neighbours' doors,
To surprise with love and thoughtfulness.
Now we do the same for distant friends
Kept in lonely isolation, at Easter or on Anzac Day,
Marking days of festival or memory

Today we keep the rules in hope of
Greater freedom, giving us release
To revel in the open air, playing, laughing.
A dream of life renewed, letting us move safely
Back to old routines and habits newly crafted.
Our old selves transformed, serene and wise.



Maureen Burke

How to hold?
How to live out plague COVID
With mind and heart knowing believing 'all things are passing'?
But how long 'till the passing?
Dare I 'be still and know ...'?

My dear old feet lead the way
Give me pause
Open my being - heart, head, mind, soul to 'see'
Be touched anew by the largesse of Spirit-god.
Yes, she does indeed 'brood with ah, bright wings.'

Yay! Give thanks to play
Give thanks to those funny faces
With crunch even better than fresh pringles.
Give thanks in awe and wonder
At the wonder of
Our common home.



Angela Slattery

Waiting

All our lives the Seasons teach us patience.
We wait for summer, sunscreen and sand,
Water runs low, then we feel our need for rain.
And after winter, the time that all things grow.
We look forward to colour upon colour
In gardens, parks and clothes.

Our lives too busy, we lack the time to wait.
We wander the supermarket then join the queue
Fretting as we slowly edge towards the front.
We notice those who 'take too long'
Judge them slow in mind and feet
We are so much more able and alert.

Now I know how to stand and wait
Without edging fast, card at the ready
With my oranges, towards the cashier.
Take time, look in her eye, read her name,
Pack my fruit, say my thanks.
May I remember when the waiting's done.



Maureen Burke

What did I see along the way?

What did I see along the way? What did I feel along the way?
Who did you meet along the way? What did you hear.....?
Where did you go? What did you taste....?
Why did you do what you did? What questions did you ask ...?

Autumn in Melbourne -
Season of great beauty
Falling leaves in glorious colours line our streets
Tree branches stark
Silhouette against the sky
Preparing for their winter sleep.

Grey, misty, chilly mornings
An early walk with the dog-
I pause when he pauses-
I notice the autumn colours - he the smells in the grass.
Stillness of soul -
A person passes by-
A smile, a nod
Path winding through the Park, We take it.

Arrive home, blessed by this beauty,
captured by the peace-
To move with this experience into the day
Covid 19 - Lockdown
An opportunity for my soul and body to
catch up.



Marg Finlay

COVID TIME 2020

I walk down our quiet street
Kicking a carpet of autumn leaves.
A child's delight - mine too.
The giant's golden filigree canopy mirrors earth
Yet now sparse enough for a distant universe to play background.
'A tree gives glory to God by being a tree.'

My shod feet engage with the fallen
Delighting in a mass of colour, curled shapes, shadows.
Hear that crunch! Better than fresh pringles!
A single foot-shuffle.
Where will they land?
Again. And again. Again.
New patterns of funny faces piled high on each other laugh at me.
Who cares where I was going!

How come so long since I have paused with autumn?
Only now
COVID-time
COVID19.
Fear. Plague. Death. Global. Ego-politics. Financial ruin.
The haves, the have-nots.
The fall-out. Parents, kids, stress. Cyber-crime.
Melbourne's refugees imprisoned in what's conveniently called a hotel.
My ache of soul.
The silence of God.

How to hold?
How to live out plague COVID
With mind and heart knowing believing 'all things are passing'?
But how long 'till the passing?
Dare I 'be still and know ...'?

My dear old feet lead the way
Give me pause
Open my being - heart, head, mind, soul to 'see'

Life in lock-down Covid-19

On the 20th March, I found myself in lock-down. What on earth would I do? Most of my occupations were no longer possible except CLC by ZOOM. My only bid for freedom was going to medical appointments, the weekly shopping and exercise.

So, after cleaning cupboards etc, Mass on Demand, phone calls, writing letters or sending emails and putting archival material on-line, under the exercise heading, I began my daily walks around the grounds and that was where my life changed.

I was walking by the grotto where I caught sight of a little mina bird sitting on a rail then flying into the bird-bath for a quick swim, out again on the rail, flapping the water from his wings and then back to do it all again. I said to Mary and Bernadette in the grotto, *God does amazing things!*

Each afternoon as I walked, I began to meet people and, keeping the required distance, we exchanged words, moments, events, briefly at first, as we were not allowed to visit anyone's unit or villa. Later, stories, gardens, the progress of the building were discussed along with waves to the fast walkers as they flashed by!

I also began to observe things more closely; the leaves falling from the trees, the colourful birds in the Grevillia tree across from me, the last of the autumn flowers, the purple Tibouchina trees all in bloom around the suburbs and the breath-taking sunsets. When I went inside for my evening prayer, I had plenty to say to God and give thanks for a world, briefly away from the Covid-19 reports and the crashing economy.



Frances Browne ibvm

Reflection during the waiting time of COVID 19:

I don't connect much – a little, but not much. I don't mind isolation.

As usual I am in my head – and happily so.

I have tried to confront myself more about this. Why am I like I am?

But I am, and why beat myself up about it? It's okay to be me.

I try to be honest with myself.

For me, life is what it is, even in this unexpected, extra-ordinary time.

I can't control it and I don't want to try.

And I am bereft of the energy now anyway.

But I do care – and deeply.

I cry a lot silently when I read about, listen to or see stories of great suffering and heroism in the face of fires, accidents, war, sacrifice, and the efforts to contain this pandemic.

I laugh at the funny jokes, videos, skits and so on that come on texts or emails, but sometimes despair at the sad truth underlying them.

I worry for others' mental health.

I get angry with the seeming need to hunt down and blame someone for mistakes made.

I find solace in quiet walks and calm beauty.

God is here in all of this. All will be well.



Marg Callaghan

Living with Coronavirus!

Covid 19 seemed to come upon us suddenly....not really, we had read a bit about it, and yet its arrival was somehow insidious. Everything seemed to be going along smoothly, Sydney's summer at its height, and people going about their usual lives, the...Covid 19 was upon us. It seemed to have crept up on us, virtually unannounced, except for the odd case we'd heard about, till there it was!!

Overnight, and with little warning, everything changed! What to do and what not to do was so important, and the city and its people changed overnight!

The streets were empty, schools were closed, shops were vacant except for the rush to get a few items of seeming importance, and hoarding was under way. People stayed at home and Sydney became like the "deserted village" with little traffic on the once busy streets. Gradually the familiar disappeared.

Phone calls became more frequent and more important, especially for those living alone. My daily walk became important, not just for the physical exercise, but because I "met" other people. There was an unspoken understanding among people I passed on the way - young and old, friend and stranger - all said "hello" and I felt a sort of oneness with humankind. The shared experience somehow gave us a feeling of understanding and concern for the other. Our usual patterns of behaviour were turned upside down, no matter which way we looked - "Keep your distance", "Wash your hands", "Don't touch your face", -- even "Change your clothes when you get home" (after a routine blood test)! All of which instructions have been religiously followed. And if you do happen to pop into the chemist, you must watch where you stand, and which way you exit.

So, what gave life during these strange times?

Walking on the promenade at Balmoral Beach, phone calls to and from family and friends, (two from school friends, one in rural NSW and one in New Zealand ("Just wondering how you were getting on"!)), books - I haven't read so much in years, Cross Words, painting (though sketching might have to suffice if the outcome is not to be wobbly!) And being in our Community we are fortunate to have some prayer.

And now I realise that summer has given way to Autumn. Hanging out some washing on a beautiful clear and sunny Sydney morning, I looked up at the trees overhead. It seemed that God was there in all His glory: all shades of gold against a blue, blue sky - really breathtakingly beautiful!

Move on, Covid 19, and thanks be to God for this beautiful world!

Jan Barlow

What did I re-discover along the way?

One day, feeling I had lots of time, I decided to down-size an abundance of past articles. I came across one precious article and re-read it - a wonderful story about Teilhard de Chardin.

One day a tall 14year old girl was running along Park Avenue, New York, late for school. She knocked over an elderly gentleman. She helped to pick him up and they exchanged greetings -Mr Taya. Then she rushed on to school. A little later she was walking with her dog in Park Avenue and again met the old man, who said he'd walk along with her. That was the beginning for Jeanne of bi-weekly walks with her fascinating companion. He delighted at each caterpillar, butterfly, bird and talked lovingly to the trees and anyone they met. He went into raptures about the sky, clouds, wind - everything. Once he mentioned 'Omega' and Jeanne wondered.



After one walk he said: *Au revoir Jeanne*. That was the last time she saw him. Years later she was given the book *The Phenomenon of Man* and on the cover was a photo of her 'old man'. Teilhard de Chardin. Jeanne discovered 'Mr Taya' had died on Easter Sunday 1955 - three days after their last meeting.

Ellen Moran

Possum Pandemic

In a burst of agricultural activity, inspired by back to nature visions of health and happiness in the face of a pandemic, I busied myself planting neat rows of peas and beans, refreshing pots with pansy seedlings and bringing to the fore showy displays of flowering chrysanthemums.

But eschewing all offers of tantalizing chillies, abundant parsley and quantities of mint, cavalcades of possums, enticed by an "all you can eat" menu, descended. Neatly nibbled pea tendrils sank dismally into the dirt, depetaled chrysanthemums drooped forlornly, while pansy seedlings disappeared into the voracious mouths of the hungry marauders. And now, all horticultural pretensions shot to pieces, my plantings resemble a war zone – battlements of wire, intricate cages and barricades of netting - forget the beauty and tranquillity of the garden – this is survival – survival of the fittest.

In this week when we celebrate *Laudato Si* I am more than a little challenged by Pope Francis' call to love creation and work to protect and nurture all creation!



Libby Rogerson

Pandemic and the future

The pandemic has caused immense suffering, distress and grief. Another aspect is that it can be seen as a **"massive trigger event with the potential to change everything!"**

It lifts one's spirit that many say they do NOT want to return to "normal" or "business as usual". This desire embraces many aspects: greater awareness of others' needs; more time to appreciate nature, community and all things beautiful; stress on collaboration and connection; justice for many suffering groups, e.g. the unemployed, homeless, victims of domestic violence, refugees.....



The IBVM, Church and World.

When planning the **IBVM** April gathering last year, we were asked to consider: **Where does the energy of the future lie?** An excellent question! What excites, challenges, moves, inspires young people? Indeed all of us, at any age.

The **Church** is currently planning a Plenary Council. How good it would be if its participants could share Ilia Delio's view of the pandemic as an opportunity to harness the energies of love in new ways. What might that mean for the entire Church?

The **world** needs to change its economic structures so that the rich no longer benefit at the expense of the poor. The Earth has to be appreciated and nourished. Human responsibility for climate change requires education, acknowledgment and action. Governments and multiple other organisations have to work together with common goals.

The pandemic opens immense possibilities if only we can capture them. It is thrilling that we are invited to be part of God's evolutionary ways of working. God loves matter!

Anne McPhee

Along the way

I faced a little more of the reality of being older, more vulnerable, cut off from any possibility of leaving our house, let alone this country!

I deepened my appreciation of Eucharist through our own celebrations as we broke open the Word together and occasionally shared communion. I ruminated often on what Covid 19 is saying to us – where is God, where are we being called? the pain, grief, and heroism being experienced by others.

I read reflectively with a young Korean sister a number of Denis Edwards' and Elizabeth Johnson's works on eco-theology.

I appreciated the mutual care of community. I felt 'guilt' as one of the few with a house and garden; so many here are squashed in insanitary rooms, prisons, huts or live on the sidewalk.

I felt trapped at times, unable to do normal things like accompany others to a doctor or go to one myself; help out with the candidates, teach at the seminary, have a coffee with a friend!!

I learned to give classes via zoom! I rejoiced at essays by several young seminarians that showed new awareness that women are equally gifted and called to minister among God's people.

I encouraged others to notice the miracle of our young frangipani tree move slowly through producing tiny knobs, then spikes then unfurl its beautiful pink flowers.

I was grateful for the timing and plentitude of mangoes that kept falling off our roof in the first month of lockdown.

I contemplated with sadness the issues facing a country slipping towards dictatorship.

Chris Burke



*The world is charged with the
grandeur of God.
It will flame out, like shining
from shook foil.
It gathers to a greatness....*



This has been... ..

- A time to step back and be still
- A time to pray and reflect
- A time to discover the beauty of local walks
- A time to appreciate blue cloudless skies
- A time to experience new ways of being and doing
- A time to clear cupboards and boxes and simplify life
- A time to connect and reconnect
- A time to Skype, Zoom, Viber, Messenger
- A time to work in a flexible timeframe
- A time to read in the sun and savour the warmth
- A time to join Netflix and watch a movie or two
- A time to go to bed earlier and ease gently into a new day
- A time to wait without fear and to trust all will be well
- A time to have time for what really matters

With gratitude and renewed hope



Helen Maguire



What did we see along the way?

This afternoon, the first Sunday since our restrictions have been lifted Bern Ziesing and I drove up into the Adelaide Hills to see if we could catch the last of the autumn colours.

We were not disappointed as Stirling lived up to its reputation. It appeared that half of Adelaide had the same idea as us, so it was good to see that in most cases people kept their physical distance. People made the most of the sunshine, sitting in groups on the grass in parks and on ovals.

I'm sure had we gone down to the beach we would have encountered the other half of Adelaide, out enjoying the glorious sunshine.

Diaan Stuart

Response to who did you see?

My response to this is really what I have **seen** on TV – heartbreaking queues of people lining up for government assistance and hearing stories of hardship. On the other hand I have seen lovely examples of different groups singing and making music to lift people’s spirits.

My response to what did I see?

Each day I have read *The Age* more closely than usual because of having more time, and have seen examples of how people are coping (or not coping) with the situation. This has often reduced me to tears when I reflect on the security that I enjoy.

I have read many letters that people have written voicing their concerns and it has inspired me to respond to *Get Up* appeals to send messages to government members responsible for the well being of minorities.

I have also read about the plight of musicians who depend on performing in concerts for their livelihood and they have been left bereft of any assurances for the future.

This also applies to all branches of the ARTS and I have been pleased to read about the efforts that have been taken to provide digital concerts to support artists.

I have seen the efforts of young people on the Climate Change Rally and feel grateful to see their efforts which also include concern for First Nation people, the original custodians of our precious country.

I have used this time to keep practising violin music which is a challenge to me (e.g. Bach sonatas). I belong to two orchestras which are affected by the pandemic and have been touched by the efforts of the conductors to keep in touch with the members when the future is so uncertain.

I have been able to see the daily Mass at North Sydney and have been grateful for this means of keeping in touch and it has given me material for reflection.

In conclusion I have been very grateful that we have the Internet, Zoom, teams etc and the phone to keep in contact with friends.

Anne Byrne

One cannot help but ponder the mystery that is COVID-19 and its power to draw us into an unfamiliar pause. Although we were quick to set up ZOOM meetings and initiate email chains, somewhere in the depth of being human, we find ourselves asking very profound questions and responding by developing new interests and brushing up on our long-formed hobbies, all as a way to say, “I am here, I am alive and I desire kinship with both the creator and the created.”

The pandemic means that our lenses have to be adjusted, shifted, reinvented to be able to tell a new story, to see with new eyes, and to love anew.

I am comforted by the constant truth that ‘God is in all things and all things are God’. This means that God meets me where I am and I meet God where God is – a story between two lovers delighting in each other, co-existing and co-creating, all for the sake of love.

Can I taste God in the midst of the pollution I experience?

Can I see God in the midst of the reoccurring images of injustice?

Can I hear God in the thick fog of consumerism and false sense of image?

Can I touch God in the wounded layers of the human soul?

Can I smell God in the planet that reeks of waste and dissolution?

God in all things.

God in the body that desires love and life.

God in the soul that anticipates beauty and truth.

God in the inquisitive mind that ponders the cosmos

as consciousness moves, evolves and forms anew.

The invitation for post-pandemic remains:

Breathe God today



Jwan Kada