

Hope

Oh when will this nightmare be over?
When will it stop getting worse?
When will our world recover?
When will the darkness disperse?

So many people are ailing,
and far too many have died.
Each day the news is depressing,
at the end of the tunnel no light.

And yet we know God is with us;
without him we'd really be lost;
But sometimes it's real hard to find Him
when we're so busy counting the cost.

We need to take time to be quiet,
just focus on this day alone –
on the beauty and goodness around us,
on our friends, on our family, our home.

Faith in Jesus our Saviour will help us
in this strange situation to cope.
He promised he'd be always with us,
so we have to hold on to our hope.

Anna May O'Reilly

Knock

When Mary came to visit Knock the times were hard indeed –
emigration, hunger, poverty and every kind of need.
Evictions too were commonplace, homeless families on the road;
The crops had failed too often and so the rents were owed.

But Faith was strong, the people knew the Church was their mainstay.
Their trust in God would see them through even their darkest days.
Then Jesus sent his Mother, his foster father and his friend
to lift their hearts, encourage them to keep on to the end.

And Jesus too himself was there, the Lamb of sacrifice,
to serve as a reminder that for their sake he died ...
Died and rose again to show how love can conquer all –
can see us through the hardest times and lift us when we fall.

Today we need that message still, for though much has improved
there still is poverty and want, many people homeless too.
Sadly, the Church is not now seen as the answer to our cries –
and God is deemed irrelevant, pushed further from our lives.

But still the faithful come to Knock to pray and weep,
to ask Mary's intercession - lay their worries at her feet.
And surely, she will heed the pleas and take them to her son,
for she is our queen and mother when all is said and done!

Sr Anna May O'Reilly D.C.

Life in Lockdown

Life in lockdown isn't easy,
sometimes it can be tough...
we all have lots of 'ups' and 'downs'
to cope with on and off.

The days are long, all much the same;
our busy world has shrunk!
We miss our friends and family;
our spirits low have sunk.

But there's much to be thankful for,
there is a brighter side,
if we can be more positive,
take one day at a time.

It helps to count our blessings,
the things we can enjoy,
and so I've made a list of what
I note as I pass by.

Now I've time to see and hear
I've time to think and pray.
I've time to write and time to read
and more time just to BE.

On many day the sun has shone
out of a cloudless sky
enhancing nature's beauty;
Gifts of God most high.
The sound of bird song fills my ears,
each with its special tune,
while everywhere I walk I see
wild flowers all in bloom.

Primroses and forget-me-nots,
daisies, violets and bluebells too,
with heather, broom and lilac
to name but just a few.

With fewer workers now around,
the animals have their fun,
foxes, squirrels, rabbits
from out of hiding come.

Something else I have to mention,
the smell of fresh-cut grass,
stirring memories of hay time,
takes me back to Summers past.

So, help me, Lord, to understand
that this time too can be
a gift that's given from your hand,
and offered lovingly.

Sr Anna May O'Reilly DC

Prayer of the Vincentian Family in the face of the coronavirus pandemic:

*Gracious God, protector of the defenseless,
look with compassion on your people
who are suffering from the dangers of this global pandemic.
Be compassionate toward us,
show us your infinite mercy
and guide the hands of those
who are attempting to overcome this situation!
Instill within us a spirit of generosity
so that we might know how to assist those who are weakest:
the elderly, the homeless and the impoverished ...
those who bear the brunt of this crisis.
Let us approach these individuals
and assist them in these difficult times!
Protect the doctors and nurses
and all health-care professionals
who are on the frontlines of this pandemic!
Enlighten their minds
so that they might find a cure.
We ask all of this
through the intercession of Jesus Christ, your Son
Our Lord, the protector of those in need. Amen.*

O Mary, conceived without sin, pray for us who have recourse to you!

PRAYER TO ST. VINCENT DE PAUL

O Saint Vincent de Paul, our father and model,
throughout your life you wished
to imitate Jesus, the missionary and servant.

In your time, you confronted
the plague, the illness of the people.

Intercede now with the Holy Trinity
on behalf of all the nations on earth visited by the modern scourge.

Help the bodies and hearts of all victims.

Strengthen caregivers, be close to all neighbours, and enlighten researchers.

Walk with those approaching the portals of death.

As you gave strong and ardent advice to struggle against evil,
so now come to our aid!

Teach us how to expose our lives for the weakest among us,
and strengthen us to help them better
in fearless perseverance.

With the sole desire of aiding them in their needs,
open our spirits to God's infinite providence.

Let us endow it with his total will for action.

Inspire in us, also, obedience to our leaders,
as we now place ourselves in your hands,
confident and fortified with genuine feelings of dedication and zeal
for our sisters and brothers.

AMEN