

A Prayer for Lent IV 2020

Most holy God...most wondrous God...
O God who is vast beyond our imagining...
O God who, nonetheless,
remains so intimately involved in our lives
that you have even numbered the hairs of our head.

We come before you this day
to express our gratitude for the gift of life
in all of its fullness and abundance...
and, yes, we come before you this day
to acknowledge the great uncertainty
and the excess of anxiety
with which we presently live.

We ask for the courage that will permit us
simply to live despite the fear...
and for the wisdom to know how we ought to live
at a time such as this.

We sense that our world has been turned upside down
with the appearance of COVID-19.

We are beginning to sense that there may not be
simple, straightforward solutions for quickly dealing
with this menace to human well-being.

And we wonder: How long, O Lord? How long?
And we wonder: does the human family have the capacity
to put its life on hold for 2-weeks
let alone the 18 months some "experts"
are now tossing about?

We, ourselves, do not pretend to possess expertise!
And we have no need to hide from you our many unanswered questions.
But we pray for you to provide us with the gifts we require
for a time such as this.

For patience. For self-control. For generosity.
For compassion. For a willingness to forgive as we have been forgiven.

Above all: for the capacity to view our neighbour's plight
with the same concern with which we regard our own,
coupled with the capacity to permit this time of global crisis
to remind us that—at the end of the day—
we who share this corner of creation are,
(when push comes to shove)
all of us neighbours.

We pray in the name of the One
who chose to be not only our neighbour,
but our Way, our Truth and our Life:
even Jesus Christ...and Him crucified and risen.
May His name be glorified this day
and forever more.
Amen.

--Foster Freed