Sisters of Saint Francis
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interchange

The Invisible Power of Grace

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Dear Friends,

An invisible entity has disrupted the routine of our lives, namely the coronavirus, referred to as COVID-19. The invisible nature of the spread led me to reflect upon another invisible reality that impacts our lives. That is the invisible power of grace, the Presence of the Risen Christ.

This year, we are deprived of our traditional liturgical rituals of Holy Week, but the infinite Love of God pervades our inner and outer lives. The Divine Presence is always with us and catches our attention in poignant moments of joy and sorrow, consolation and distress, peace and disturbance. The Sister residents at Assisi Heights are experiencing their own "stay at home" because of restrictions to remain on their corridors to mitigate the spread of COVID-19. Their faith witnesses to the invisible power of the Risen Christ that overcomes fear, pervades all interactions with renewed attentiveness to each other, and deepens our dedicated prayer life.

This Easter season, the Sisters pray for you to know the Presence of the Risen Christ that sustains us on our life's journey.

May you know God's blessings, Always!

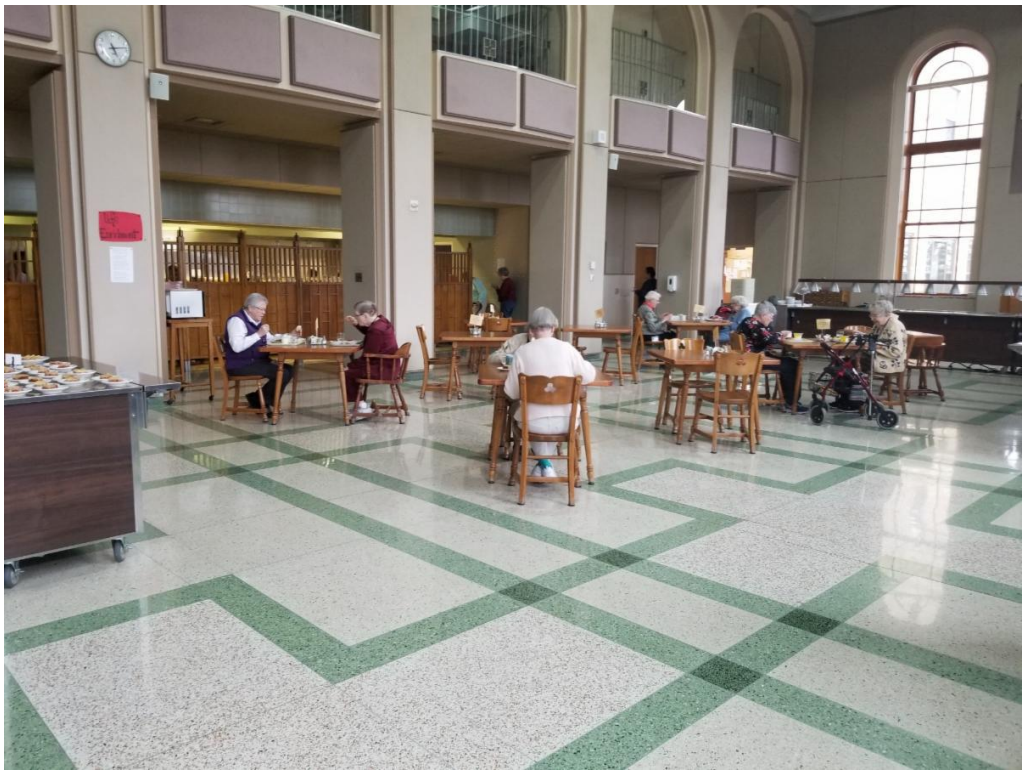
Sister Ramona Miller
Congregational Minister

What's up at the Heights... and beyond?

Despite the precautions and restrictions in place at Assisi Heights, the Sisters of Saint Francis have been adapting, whether working or sheltering-in-place!

For instance: Social distancing around the table while video-conferencing...

Prior to enhanced restrictions, Sisters exhibited social distancing habits during meals, which is far different from the usual crowded, bustling dining room activities!



And, at Saint Marys Hospital Convent, the Sisters model their social distancing while wearing masks made for them by a volunteer!

Time Out! *by Sister Marlys Jax*

Sisters of Saint Francis
Assisi Heights Spirituality Center

Time Out!

WE at Assisi Heights Spirituality Center are learning how to live differently. WE have been visited by an invisible v_ _ _ _. Like the world about us, we have had to cancel many programs and distance ourselves from our many guests, tourists, program participants and friends. It means sacrificing for the protection of all. Our goals has shifted to a new season.

While on furlough, I have been climbing stairs at Assisi Heights.

I count the steps every day, one, one, one!

At Assisi Heights we are counting the days to the end this crisis, one, one, one.

In the Spiritual life, it is always the beginning.

When we are released from this TIME OUT, we will get you and our programs up to speed one, one, one.

In the meantime, remember we all have access to the Divine!

From the Office of Mission Advancement

by June Howard, Director

Dear Friends,

Thinking of you today and sending warm thoughts your way. We miss seeing you and the Sisters!

Our work remains busy here in the Office of Mission Advancement as thoughtful donors continue to send in their donations during this difficult time.

We are doing our part for everyone's safety by practicing social distancing, keeping everything disinfected, and working remotely as much as possible. It is very quiet on our wing here at Assisi Heights. The hallway outside our room which would normally be bustling with activity, is empty most of the time, as the doors are shut on both ends of the hall. I rarely see a co-worker as we are keeping our office doors closed now. The Sisters residing at Assisi Heights have more time for prayer and reflection because all activities have been suspended due to the concern of COVID-19. Knowing that they are praying for you and me each and every day is heartwarming.

I wanted to let you know that Cathy (Bakken) Tjepkes has stepped down from her position here, as she is moving to Texas. Kim Jaworski started training last Monday as our new Mission Advancement Office Assistant. (See photo) I am excited to have her join the Mission Advancement team!

Thank you for your gifts, your friendship and your prayers.

Peace and all good,

June

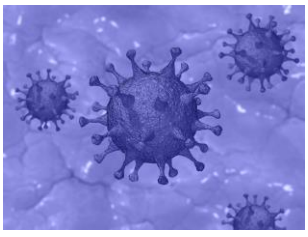
Pajama Pandemic

by Sister Marlys Jax

This Pajama Pandemic Reflection was written under a handmade heirloom quilt.

My to-do list is long and rarely finished. It grows. Some items move to the top. Others just sit and become place holders. Sure, I shuffle them to make room for the most important.

Suddenly I hear the word HALT! A ***command,*** no less. A mandate to shelter-in-place. It feels like house arrest without an ankle bracelet. Confined, cocoon-like. An enemy --invisible-- overs the planet taking up residence without invitation. It lingers. It invades. It clings like Velcro! It kills. They name it COVID-19. (V_ _ _ _)



You can't catch it! It can catch you!

You can't see it! It is an invisible v_ _ _ _!

You can't box it, wrap it up and bury it! It is illusive!

But there ends the list of coronavirus-19's shortcomings. It is tiny and mysteriously powerful. Scientists have not been able to conquer this most highly prized and sculpted giant v_ _ _ _. It touts a purple ribbon. It is the "best in show" in the chemist's laboratories. It has achieved the most successes in the world. We don't have a lifetime to wait to take it into custody.

There is no host too young or too old. There are no boundaries, no state lines, no time zones, and no zip codes left unattended. There is no room for vacations, no time off and no weekends off. V_ _ _ _ is on 24/7/365. The v_ _ _ _ is surprisingly easy to share. Refined as it appears, this specimen is a scientific prima donna --a show off-- flexible enough to tolerate a wide range of variations. All faith traditions, cultures, languages, nationalities, races, ethnicities, are eligible.

It is the perfect example of equity of treatment! It visited Charles, the queen's son, and Peter, New York City policeman and Christian Wood of the Detroit Pistons, and actor, Tom Hanks and a no name NYC street derelict. It operates from a movable control tower. Personal freedom is curtailed. Life and work are on a leash.

The v_ _ _ _ is the messenger, not the message!

This v_ _ _ _ is savagely unpredictable and powerful. Deaths are counted exponentially. This v_ _ _ _ has few rivals. Broader than it is high, the v_ _ _ _ has held its place of honor for a mere 5 months since 'coming out'. Its first public appearance was on the other side of the world. It moves in with vulnerable hosts, whether or not it knows their names or social security numbers. It banks on success. Perhaps that is why it lights up its host's fiery fury, calling on unsuspecting ancestors and honoring them with a visit.

(Click here to continue reading the entire article.)

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