

GOD IN THE CHAOS

“Now the earth was formless and empty, darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the Spirit of God was hovering over the waters.” (Genesis 1:2)

Genuine Faith

When the earth was formless and empty and dark... God's Spirit was hovering over the waters.

God is in the chaos. God seems silent, yet He is present.

One can argue:

Babies are murdered in the womb, aborted –
God is Silent

Spouses are abused and betrayed –
God is Silent

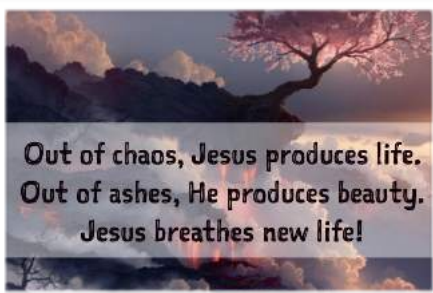
Relatives and friends died all alone during this pandemic –
God is Silent



Where is God?

Light and darkness is contrasted all throughout Scripture. Daily, we all exercise faith in some form or another. When we put money in the bank, by faith we believe that we can draw it out anytime. When we eat at a restaurant, by faith we trust that the meal will be delicious and it won't make us ill. And when we fly, by faith we believe that the pilot knows how to fly the airplane and he will take us safely to our destination.

The Christian faith is about **complete trust, dependence, confidence and reliance** on the power of God's Holy Spirit revealed through Jesus Christ. Faith must have an object and the proper object of genuine faith is God.



Where is God?

For us Catholics, our troubled souls might be asking, **“Where is God in this Covid-19?”**

If God is All-Powerful and All-Good, why do bad things happen?

The *why* questions admittedly have no answer ... but a **DISTURBING SILENCE OF GOD!**

The Eternal God of the Universe, the All-Powerful is *Silent*. The silence of God can be most disturbing and disconcerting.



Is God in Self-Quarantine?

In the past when natural disasters occur, people flock to Churches and church leaders around the world call for prayers. But today, churches all over the world are closed to curb the spread of the coronavirus. Many asked: Where God is? Is God accessible or is God in self-quarantine? If God is there at all! In whom or where can we get solace and hope? Can we find God in the chaos of our lives?

Try to be the **“eye in the middle of the storm”** to experience God both in the chaos and in the stillness.

Throughout history, nothing has killed more human beings than infectious diseases. Covid-19 shows how vulnerable we can be with no respecter of nations, race, language or religion. In times of crisis, **faith** and **hope** is what we are looking for.

Italian journalist Ferraresi wrote in New York Times on 10 March 2020, *“Holy water is not a hand sanitiser and prayer is not a vaccine ... but for believers religion is a fundamental source of spiritual healing and hope. It is a remedy against despair providing psychological and emotional support and an integral part of being ...”*



A Reflection: Rainer Marie Rilke's letter to a young poet...

"I want to beg you, as much as I can, dear sir, to be patient toward all that is unsolved in your heart and to try to love the questions themselves like locked rooms and like books that are written in a very foreign tongue.

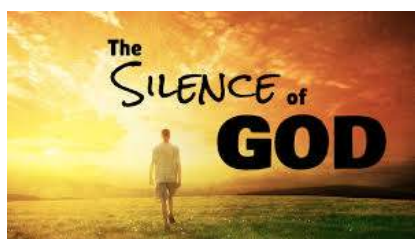
Do not now seek the answers, which cannot be given you because you would not be able to live them [bold, mine]

And the point is, to live everything.

Live the questions now.

Perhaps you will then gradually, without noticing it, live along some distant day into the answer."

(4 Dec 1875-29 Dec 1926)



We all want intellectual clarity and many will spend hours watching the news programs and trawling the internet in the hope of gleaming some hope of news and information to help them understand what is happening – Why was I spared and others died? Our world view is a pivotal part of our existence. We will have no hesitation to say that coronavirus is bad. **Can God be found in this chaos? In this Covid-19?**

The Silence of God

Atheists will tell us the reason God is *Silent* is because *He's absent*. "No one's home at that address. Duh." In the silent suffering season of the pandemic, we can be tempted to believe this untruth.

The silence of God is something all of us are very familiar with. But so was Jesus, which we must never, ever forget. Even though Jesus is the Second Person of the Blessed Trinity made Incarnate, in His human nature Jesus Christ knew the *Silence of God* that every human being will go through, as He hung on the Cross on Good Friday. Jesus experienced such intense distress and emptiness that He cried out, "**My God, my God, why have You forsaken me?**" (Matthew 27:46 and Mark 15:34). In Aramaic, "**Eli, Eli, la'ma sabach-tha'ni?**" – the very first words of Psalm 22.

BELIEVE...

By faith, Able offered to God a more acceptable sacrifice than Cain (Genesis 4:2-5)

By faith, Enoch was taken by God in a whirlwind and never saw death (Genesis 5:24)

By faith, Noah obeyed God and built an ark to save himself and his family (Genesis 6:14-9:17)

By faith, Abraham believed God and it was credited to him as righteousness (Romans 4:3)

By faith, a woman with an issue of blood for twelve years was healed (Matthew 9:20-22)

By faith, the sight of two blind men were restored (Matthew 9:27-30)

By faith, Jairus' daughter was resuscitated to life (Mark 5:40-42)

Jesus knew the whole psalm from the Old Testament was about Him. Jesus cried out in terrible agony and from heaven there came – Nothing! There was no audible response from God the Father, there was only a **Deafening Silence!**

Why does it need to feel that way? *Why* the perceived silence? *Why* can it seem like God is playing hard to get or like He's just standing there looking at us when we cry to Him for help?

Are we locked out?

We are locked in and locked up but we should not lock others out of our lives. We self-isolate to curb the spread of the virus, but we can use technology to reach out to others in faith and to pray for the world. We have no answer to the mysteries of life. Some call this a chastisement from God to bring us on our knees in repentance.

Perhaps, we can meditate today on *Jesus' Experience of God's Silence*. Quite positively Jesus might be praying the rest of Psalm 22 as He hung on the cross – if not with His lips, at the very least in His heart. Jesus *did not* receive any answers to His loud cry – only His Father's Silence. There was no answer to Jesus' excruciating pain! The answer Jesus received in the rest of Psalm 22 was an answer of Hope – the hope of final vindication and a future resurrection! And maybe - at this pandemic – for us too!

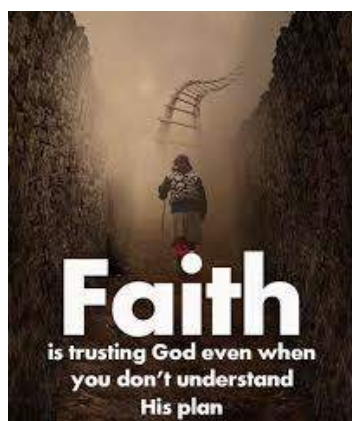
HOW DO YOU KEEP
MOVING WITH JESUS IN
THE MIDST OF CHAOS?

Andrew Peterson's Song, "The Silence of God"

It's enough to drive a man
crazy, it'll break a man's faith
It's enough to make him
wonder, if he's ever been
sane
When he's bleating for
comfort from Thy staff and
Thy rod
And the Heaven's only
answer is the **Silence of
God.**

Continue to trust God
and obey Him.

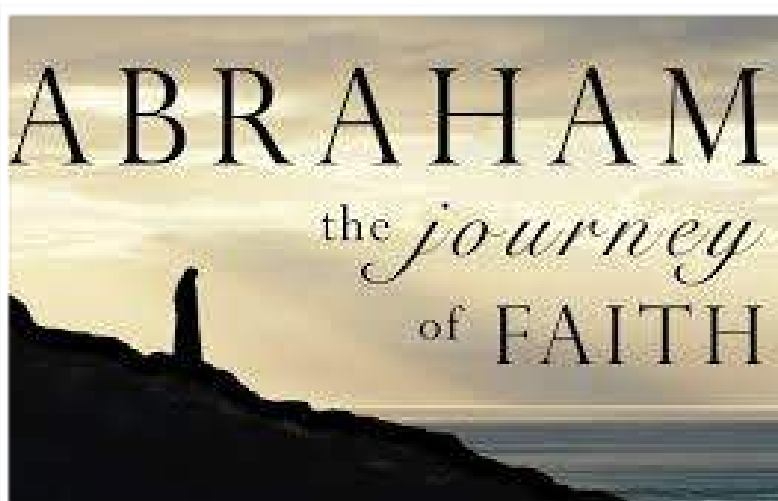
Believe that God's
Spirit hovers over the
Covid-19 even in the
sound of silence.



By: Fr Andrew Wong, Spiritual Director &

Veronica Nathan, Program Manager/ Counsellor

Like Jesus, we may cry out, *Why?* And still be baffled with The Sound of Silence. But the resurrection is imminent. Jesus said, **"According to your faith, will it be done for you."** (Matthew 9:29)



No doubt the scriptures show that faith plays a key role in receiving from God. Jesus always credited their faith with being the catalyst. God has given us a measure of faith, but it is up to us to exercise it to grow. Our day-to-day lives are to consist of walking in faith. In order for us to grow in faith, it must be exercised on a regular basis.

We need to look at the many things that we are involved in daily and the problems that we come up against as opportunities to exercise our faith. This will prepare us to receive from God when He breaks the silence someday. Resist the temptation to complain, backslide, get discouraged and crippled in faith permanently.

God honours faith! Praise the Lord! Alleluia!