

On the Covid Frontline

I work in Radiology in a hospital in the East of England – a region that is yet to experience the covid-19 virus with quite the same ferocity as colleagues in London and Birmingham, and certainly the situation is nowhere near as bad as that in China, Iran, Spain and, of course Italy. But patients are coming into the hospital in increasing numbers experiencing the respiratory distress of a covid-19 infection. So, I'm finding out what it's like to be on the front line during an epidemic.

As I write the country is in so-called 'lockdown', and the virus is impacting upon every aspect of all our lives. The News outlets report the best in people and the worst in people - examples of selfish behavior, especially in and around supermarkets, but also examples of people going well out of their way to help people who become very vulnerable during this period. I'm privileged to work alongside the very best.

Fear is almost the defining feature of this crisis. Of course, the patients themselves are frightened, our hearts go out to them, and though we are separated from them by our protective equipment we can still show that we care, and that we are doing our level best to help them.

The staff are frightened, too. I have heard long-serving, experienced staff tell me how very frightened they are. The conflict between their duty to our patients and their desire to protect themselves and their families is, at times, overwhelming. I'm spending a great deal of my time trying to be reassuring and trying to keep a grip on an ever-changing situation. It's the same across the hospital. Yet, every day, these wonderful people come towards the danger when their instincts tell them to run in the opposite direction.

Am I frightened? Yes, indeed I am frightened. I'm frightened that it will get as bad here as it has been in Italy. I'm frightened that some of my staff will become seriously ill, or worse, because so many healthcare staff seem to be getting sick despite all the protective equipment that we use. And, of course, I'm frightened for the people I care about. Maybe it's OK to be frightened, because that is better than being blasé, overconfident, and foolhardy.

However, I think our faith in our God is a way to turn fear into calm. It connects us to others across the ages who have faced far, far worse situations than this. No-one is trying to drop high explosives down my chimney. There was only basic equipment and medicine during the so-called 'Spanish Flu' of 1918-1920. The bubonic plagues of the Middle Ages took a much higher death toll, and the medicine of the time had absolutely no answer to it.

For our generation, who by the grace of God have only known peace, and for whom life has gone on much the same for several decades, it is a terrifying experience.

So far in most of our lives, we have not had to rely on God to quite the same extent as former generations but maybe, just maybe, this crisis will bring us closer to each other and to the God who loves us so dearly.

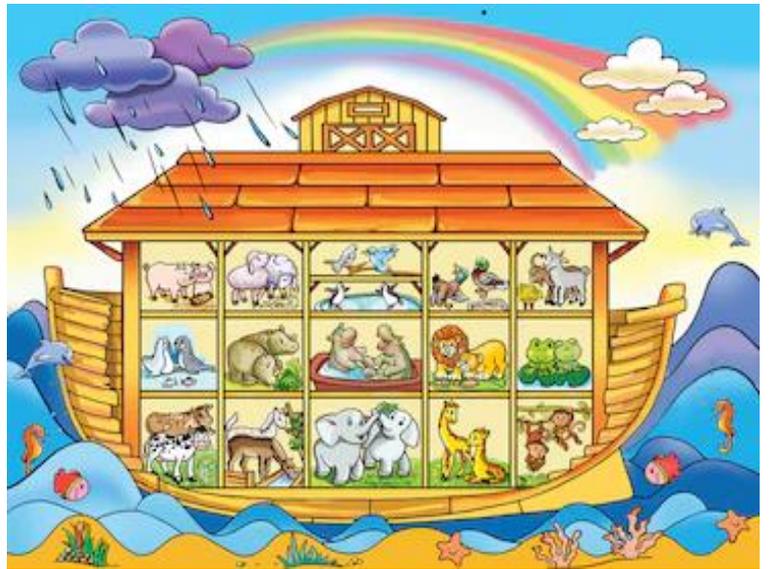
This comes from Nigel Beeton, who works for the NHS, and who also happens to be one of the resident poets on Parish Pump! Nigel hopes to continue this as a regular Diary during the crisis.

Source: Parish Pump



A Family in 'Lockdown' – Noah's Ark

40 days, 40 nights in the Ark, Noah's family was confined in a boat. There were no windows, no balconies, no terraces, no internet, no phone, no TV, no YouTube, Facebook or Netflix. They only heard the rain. They spend their time praying, loving each other and caring for the animals. God the father took care of them as Noah was a man of faith and obeyed His word. Remember even though there is out there an ocean of viruses and life seems like a stormy ride, our God is watching over us! Do not be afraid! Be faithful to Him and watch patiently. The rain will stop one day. A rainbow will shine and all be well again.



Source: Southcliff Methodist Church

Be Our Hope

God of Compassion,
be close to those who are ill, afraid or in isolation.
In their loneliness, be their consolation;
In their anxiety, be their hope;
In their darkness, be their light;
through Him who suffered alone on the cross,
but reigns with you in glory.
Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen

By Barbara Glasson