

Is it really possible that two years ago the word COVID was not even in our vocabulary? A disease that has now deeply affected practically every human being on our planet. People have experienced painful separation from loved ones and even worse sometimes their loss, severe illness and feelings of isolation and loneliness. Economies have been turned upside down and now even attending church is considered high risk.

Although this has been a painful and heartbreaking two years for all of us, my hope is that when we finally do emerge from this pandemic we will be a more faithful, compassionate, thoughtful and appreciative people.

Many lessons have been learned from these past two years, but one that resonates with me is a quote from St-Exupery's, "The Little Prince" which says, "It is only with the heart that one can see rightly, what is essential is invisible to the eye".

Among these essentials is first our relationship to God. My sense is we have all done a lot more praying since corona entered our world and we have needed our faith more than ever to help us navigate these difficult times. A second essential is our great need for human connection. Just imagine how wonderful it will be when we can once again gather for an in person coffee hour and maybe even give each other a hug. A much greater appreciation of the extraordinary fellowship we share has emerged from this pandemic. A third one is a sense of compassion for our fellow human beings. This virus has starkly awakened us to the deep economic and social divide in our community. As essential as filling food banks and providing clothing is, and we at St Francis have done a wonderful job of answering that call, we must also become advocates for economic opportunity and social justice if this divide is ever going to be eliminated. Hopefully our hearts will lead us to become more committed to these efforts.

So as covid 19 approaches its final stages it is my hope that this pandemic has enabled us as the words of Godspell say, "to see more clearly, to love more dearly and to follow rather more nearly" and may we always remember the words of the Little Prince, "The most beautiful things in the world can not be seen or touched, they are felt in the heart".

-Nancy Bisset