

A Meditation for the Anxious During Covid-19

<https://jesuits.org/news-detail?tn=news-20200316025413>

March 16, 2020 — Become aware of your breath.

Breathe in. Breathe out. Breathe in. Breathe out.

Bring your breathing under control. It's hard. We're in uncertain times, uncharted waters. Our breaths might be short, panicked. We may have forgotten to breathe all together.

Breathe in. Breathe out. Breathe in. Breathe out.

Slowly, read Psalm 46:11: "Be still and know that I am God!" God is speaking to you. How do you respond?

Be still and know that I am God.

God of all people, my faith is tested during this time of pandemic. Your houses of prayer and worship stand empty: Can we gather together without contracting disease? Can the most vulnerable members of our human family — the elderly, the sick — come to pray without fear?

The answer to these questions, it seems, is no.

Be still and know that I am.

God, I know that you are here, even if I sit alone in my home. Just as you appeared to Moses in the burning bush, you appear to us now, in surprising, unsettling ways.

I may not find you where I expect you — my community, the Mass, the Eucharist — but give me eyes to find you in new places: livestreams, Facetime and quiet solitude.

Be still and know.

God of the sick, God of the vulnerable, give me clarity to see through the noise and clutter. Grant me serenity that I may have a level head with which to weigh the information I am given. Sustain me with fortitude that I may have the courage to learn all I need to know about this disease that plagues our world.

I do not want to give in to fear, panic, hysteria. But I do want to make good decisions, for myself, my community and my world. Help me to do so.

Be still.

I know that I have to change my daily life, my daily routine. I know that I can no longer come and go as I wish. In this Lenten season, remind me of the spiritual significance of fasting: setting things aside to make room for you, God, and for the common good. Give me a spirit of fasting as I confront this disease.

May I see these moments of stillness — moments that I am not out at bars, restaurants, events and activities — as opportunities to encounter you. And as my small yet important contribution to the common good of our world. Be.

I feel as though there is so little I can do to bring about an end to this crisis. Grant me the wisdom to simply be, to sit, to rest, to watch and to trust that your hand is at work, guiding and protecting medical professionals, scientists, first responders and government officials, as well as my neighbors, particularly those who are most vulnerable.

Breathe in. Breathe out. Breathe in. Breathe out.

Amen.



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