News



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Welcome to NCR's Coronavirus Tracker, where you can find the latest news about the coronavirus pandemic as it relates to the Catholic Church and other institutions. We hope you find it useful in navigating these complex times and welcome your suggestions for how we might improve it. We're currently updating the Tracker twice a day, early in the morning and late in the afternoon. To receive the Coronavirus Tracker by email each weekday afternoon, sign up here. We completed updates to today's tracker at 4:30 pm EDT.

In the time of COVID-19, the cloistered life offers lessons for the world

Catholic News Service, March 18

For cloistered nuns, limiting contact with the world is part of life.

Africa should 'prepare for the worst' with virus, WHO says

The Associated Press, March 18

Though the pandemic is in its early days on the continent, health experts have warned that even facilities in Africa's richest nation -- South Africa -- could be overwhelmed by the virus' spread.

As Catholics hunker down, Latino base communities provide a church alternative

Peter Feuerherd (NCR), March 18

In many Latino countries, much of church life has focused around small groups. The small-group model could be a viable alternative for Latinos and the wider church amid the pandemic.

Pandemic can be time to rediscover love, kindness, pope says

Catholic News Service, March 18

People must use this time of the coronavirus pandemic to rediscover the importance of small, concrete gestures of affection and care, Pope Francis said in a new

interview.

Catholic response to coronavirus in Nigeria varies

NCR, March 18

Nigeria is the first sub-Saharan African country to report cases of COVID-19. Dioceses there are taking varying measures to prevent the spread of the disease.

Rio's Christ statue closes and state of emergency decreed

The Associated Press, March 18

The 125-foot-tall statue, which last year saw almost 2 million visitors, closed at day-end March 17 and won't reopen for at least a week.

Communion of saints, an important tenet of our faith, can help during coronavirus times

Daniel P. Horan (NCR), March 18

Faith Seeking Understanding (column): "At its core, the communion of saints is an affirmation of the empowering, unifying and healing work of the Holy Spirit among all God's people and creation."

Pope Francis on Coronavirus crisis: 'Don't waste these difficult days.'

La Repubblica, March 18

Pope Francis: "During these difficult days we can find small, concrete gestures expressing closeness and concreteness towards the people closest to us, a caress

for our grandparents, a kiss for our children, for the people we love. These are important, decisive gestures. If we live these days like this, they won't be wasted."

DePaul faculty member tests positive for COVID-19

ABC7, March 18

The school said the faculty member alerted them Tuesday night of the positive test.

Pope at Mass prays for those who have died because of the virus

Vatican News, March 18

"Today we pray for the deceased, those who have died because of the virus," Pope Francis began the liturgy on Wednesday morning in the Casa Santa Marta chapel. He then continued asking that we pray with him for "for health care providers who have given their life in service for the sick."

Rightwing conspiracies swirling around coronavirus cost lives

Michael Sean Winters (NCR), March 18

What is scarier than COVID-19? The rightwing conspiracies swirling around COVID-19. Moments like these bring people to show their truest selves, if not always their best selves. As Simeon said to Mary: "and you yourself a sword will pierce so that the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed."

US is pushing to reject all asylum seekers, citing coronavirus worries

CNN, March 18

The administration is pushing to use the coronavirus pandemic to accomplish some of the tough immigration restrictions that hardliners have struggled to put into practice since President Donald Trump took office, including blocking entry to asylum seekers, according to US officials briefed on the plans.

Seven test positive for COVID-19 at two Queens churches

New York Daily News, March 17

Seven people who were at two Catholic churches have tested positive for coronavirus, including a Eucharistic Minister.

This is not the end of the world, according to Christians who study the end of the world

The Washington Post, March 17

Revelation-focused prophesiers don't see coronavirus as heralding the Second Coming and end of life on Earth.

Coronavirus isn't stopping churches from feeding the homeless

KSAT.com, March 17

Volunteers in San Antonio are finding creative ways to feed homeless while obeying CDC, city

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Millions of American workers are left out of the coronavirus paid leave bill

Vox, March 17

After amendments by Republicans on Monday, Congress' paid sick leave bill could leave out millions of Americans who work for small businesses. The amendments also limited paid family leave to parents dealing with school closures — leaving out people who need to stay home because a family member was exposed to the virus or is displaying symptoms.

VP Pence Warns Coronavirus Outbreak Could Last 'Well Into July'

NPR, March 17

With the Trump administration hoping to inject as much as $1 trillion into the economy to deal with the mounting coronavirus crisis, Vice President Pence warned on Tuesday that disruptions from the outbreak could continue until at least midsummer.

Catholic weddings, funerals may continue in Baton Rouge under these coronavirus restrictions

The Advocate, March 17

The bishop unveiled new guidelines including strict limits on who can attend weddings and funerals.

Advertisement

New York governor dismisses idea of NYC shelter in place order hours after mayor said to prepare for it

CBS News, March 17

The governor of New York on Tuesday night waved off the idea of putting New York City under a shelter-in-place policy due to the coronavirus pandemic — just hours after the city's mayor told residents they should be "prepared right now" for that possibility.

Hong Kong to quarantine all visitors to preserve success of coronavirus efforts

Reuters, March 17

Hong Kong will quarantine for 14 days all people entering the city starting midnight on Thursday to prevent an "explosion" of coronavirus cases around the world compromising one of the world’s most successful outbreak limitation campaigns.

Tensions between China and Trump administration over coronavirus escalate with expulsion of U.S. reporters

The Washington Post, March 17

China’s expulsion of American reporters from three major news organizations on Tuesday marked a major escalation of a proxy war between the world’s two largest economies over the origin and global spread of the novel coronavirus that President Trump has called the "Chinese virus."

How NASA is keeping coronavirus off the International Space Station

Big Think, March 17

There are no respirators in space. As concerned as you may be at the moment about coronavirus following you into your personal quarantine, imagine getting COVID-19 in space, trapped in a vehicle far above the nearest hospital. As the next planned mission to the International Space Station (ISS) on April 9 gets closer, it's reasonable to wonder what can be done to protect astronauts already aboard from the potentially catastrophic arrival of the coronavirus.

Italy struggles to make room for onslaught of virus patients

Associated Press, March 17

Three weeks into Italy’s coronavirus crisis, Dr. Sergio Cattaneo has seen an unused ward outfitted into an intensive care unit in six days, a hospital laundry room converted into a giant stretcher-filled waiting room and a tented field hospital erected outside to test possible new virus patients. But Cattaneo, head of anesthesiology and intensive care at the public hospital in Brescia in northern Italy, still can’t get his head around the curve — the upward slope of new infections in Italy.

Europe hunkers down for war against coronavirus

Politico, March 17

It's the real Fortress Europe but not the way anyone expected.

EU leaders on Monday imposed a new wave of drastic measures aimed at slowing the spread of the coronavirus that has infected more than 180,000 people worldwide, killed more than 7,000 and is now threatening to overwhelm health systems in the richest, most-advanced countries on Earth.

U.K. Steps Up Coronavirus Prevention, But Its Hospitals Have Already Been Strained

NPR, March 17

The United Kingdom's government is urging the public to work from home and avoid pubs, restaurants and theaters to slow the spread of the coronavirus as the death toll hit 67, with 1,950 confirmed cases. But, unlike some other European countries, including Ireland, the U.K. will keep schools open for now.

This story appears in the **Coronavirus Tracker** feature series. View the full series.