News



Joshua J. McElwee

View Author Profile



Jesse Remedios

View Author Profile

jremedios@ncronline.org
Follow on Twitter at @JCRemedios

Join the Conversation

Send your thoughts to *Letters to the Editor*. Learn more

March 23, 2020
Share on BlueskyShare on FacebookShare on TwitterEmail to a friendPrint

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. The Tracker was last updated at 4:40 pm EDT.

Is St. Corona the patron saint of pandemics?

Religion News Service, March 23

Were you — out of quarantine boredom perhaps — to Google "patron saint of pandemics," you might be surprised by the results.

New Orleans Archbishop Aymond says he has tested positive for coronavirus

nola.com, March 23

New Orleans Archbishop Gregory Aymond has tested positive for the coronavirus. Aymond, 70, joins more than 1,100 Louisianans who as of Monday had tested positive for COVID-19.

'What did you learn from the coronavirus pandemic?'

Global Sisters Report, March 23

"Let us pray that we learn through this pandemic the stark realization that we are all connected; that when we face into our fears, we can transform them through love; and that we emerge from it all committed to a new way of being and acting."

Meditating on death during a pandemic

Religion News Service, March 23

Fr. Thomas Reese: "It is easy to ignore death when we are young or in good health, but sickness and other disasters force us to recognize our finitude. A pandemic makes it impossible not to think about death."

'Every man for himself' is not a solution to pandemic, pope says

Catholic News Service, March 23

As more and more countries start to feel the economic pinch due to the coronavirus pandemic, Pope Francis urged business leaders to seek solutions that will not hurt employees and their families.

War-torn Syria braces for lockdown after first virus case

The Associated Press, March 23

Syrians rushed to stock up on food and fuel March 23 amid fears that authorities would resort to even stricter measures after reporting the first coronavirus infection in the country, where the healthcare system has been decimated by nearly a decade of civil war.

Pope Francis prays for families facing financial problems

Vatican News, March 23

During Mass on Monday morning at the Casa Santa Marta, Pope Francis prays for families facing financial difficulties due to the coronavirus pandemic, and says prayer requires faith, perseverance and courage.

Class in your pajamas: Chicago Catholic schools carry on with e-learning

Brian Roewe (NCR), March 23

Teachers, students and parents alike recover educational routines in the new normal of remote learning in schools across the Chicago Archdiocese in the wake of the global coronavirus outbreak.

Masses go digital with livestreamed services; find out how to join

Sophie Vodvarka (NCR), March 21

Dioceses across the world canceled in-person services in response to the growing COVID-19 pandemic throughout the past week. This new reality created a massive new viewership for televised and livestreamed Masses and worship rituals, and Catholics swiftly met the spiritual need.

In a Pandemic, Religion Can Be a Balm and a Risk

The New York Times, March 22

As scientists and politicians struggle for a response to the coronavirus, many people are turning to faith. But some practices raise public health concerns.

Online religion grows rapidly in era of 'holy unknowing'

Pittsburgh Post-Gazette, March 22

Communion on Facebook Live, minyan on Zoom, meditation on YouTube, and sermons, worship sessions and Bible studies via livestreaming.

Americans of all religions moved quickly from shuttered sanctuaries to their virtual pews, prayer rugs or meditation cushions this week in what appears to be an unprecedented explosion of online religion.

Coronavirus: Faith leaders 'bend the rules,' use tech, ponder rituals of prayer and death

Reno Gazette Journal, March 22

Many churches and other places of faith are self-isolating along with the rest of the community in Northern Nevada, forcing religious leaders to lock the doors of facilities and rely on technology to keep their faith-based communities together.

In wake of the coronavirus, religious leaders are concerned about the future

The Jersey Journal, March 22

Lutheran Pastor Gary Grindeland returned my call at 9:15 in the evening after he had spent three hours calling every one of his parishioners at Grace Lutheran in Bayonne and Trinity Lutheran in Greenville, Jersey City.

“People are fine holed up and not meeting,” he said, “and they expect to make it work for themselves.”

Principles of prayer, love and neighborliness playing out in religious communities

The Gazette, March 22

The Rev. Nori Rost did a doorbell ditch of sorts Thursday. She rang doorbells at 10 homes of All Souls Unitarian Universalist Church members, left a teddy bear on the stoop and ran back to her car.

“Somebody said they miss the hugs, so I’m sending All Souls bears,” said Rost, the church’s minister. “We have to come up with creative ways to touch people’s hearts.”

Advertisement

British hospitals likened to war zones as doctors prepare to make grim decisions

The Guardian, March 23

NHS hospitals are in urgent need of ventilators and are approaching full capacity because of the Covid-19 outbreak, which will increasingly force doctors to make tough decisions about which patients to treat, the British Medical Association has warned.

Trump Activates National Guard in California, New York, and Washington

Slate, March 22

President Donald Trump said Sunday that he had activated National Guard units in New York, California, and Washington state to help fight against the rapidly spreading coronavirus. The deployment is not equal to martial law and Trump emphasized that governors “remain in command” even though the federal government “will be funding 100 percent of the cost” of deploying the units.

Germany's Merkel goes into quarantine after contact with infected doctor

Reuters, March 22

German chancellor Angela Merkel went into quarantine on Sunday after coming into contact with a coronavirus-infected doctor shortly after announcing more curbs on social interaction to slow the spread of the disease.

UK could face Italy-style lockdown, warns Boris Johnson

The Guardian, March 22

The public must stop congregating in public or face new coronavirus enforcement measures within 24 hours, Boris Johnson has said, amid growing concern that his previous attempts to encourage social distancing were being ignored.

France toughens lockdown penalties as coronavirus kills medic

Reuters, March 22

French lawmakers approved tougher penalties for defying a nationwide confinement order as the coronavirus death toll rose on Sunday, with a first member of the country's medical profession among the victims.

Spain to extend state of emergency as Covid-19 death toll passes 1,700

The Irish Times, March 22

The Spanish government sought on Sunday to extend until April 11th a state of emergency that it has imposed to try to control Europe's second-worst outbreak of coronavirus.

Olympic officials concede Tokyo Games may be postponed; Canada won't send athletes in 2020

The Washington Post, March 22

After weeks of insisting the Tokyo Games would take place on schedule this summer, Olympic officials revealed Sunday they are considering a postponement, which could mark the first step in ultimately delaying the world's largest sporting event because of the novel coronavirus.

Coronavirus deals blow to NASA's 2024 return-to-moon plan

Reuters, March 22

The coronavirus has dealt a blow to NASA's plan to return Americans to the moon by 2024, as the space agency chief on Thursday ordered the temporary closure of two rocket production facilities after an employee tested positive for the illness.

Franciscan Monastery says member is D.C.'s first known coronavirus death

The Washington Post, March 21

A member of the Franciscan Monastery of the Holy Land in America is the first person to die of the novel coronavirus in the District.

Archdiocese of Newark Parish Support Initiative

Cardinal Joseph Tobin, March 21

The Archdiocese of Newark announced a fundraising initiative specifically aimed at supporting the continued outreach ofthe archdiocesan parishes during the pandemic.

The church that won't close its doors over the coronavirus

The Washington Post, March 20

To the police officers who came to the porch of his Baton Rouge church to order it closed, to the White House liaison who called him, to people slamming him across social media, Baton Rouge Pastor Tony Spell has a response: What about Planned Parenthood? What about Target?

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