Opinion
Culture
News



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by Thomas C. Fox

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April 8, 2020

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It's Holy Week.

We've all slowed down. Newfound tranquility comes with awareness of enormous suffering. Sometimes, too much to absorb. I turn off television for a respite. Tepidly, I eventually turn it back on. Stories everywhere about rising numbers of illnesses and deaths, exhausted medical staffs, bagged corpses, burials void of family and friends.

This year's Good Friday certainly is unlike any other we have experienced. In its wake, this year's Easter rebirth still seems so far away. Some of us will never see it, this side of the grave.

These wretched yet sometimes unexpectedly uplifting days, times punctuated with untold small acts of kindness, will almost certainly transform us. I hope we emerge larger, more generous, more connected people. For we will all, together, have vanquished a common foe, a submicroscopic replicating agent that attacks our bodies without distinction. Every day that passes until our Easter comes is an opportunity to set the path and grow to be more caring, more empathetic, more grateful people. First, we must imagine, then become resolute.

I write this short essay from my home in Roeland Park, Kansas, some 2 miles from NCR's central headquarters in midtown Kansas City, Missouri. Equipped with laptops and new technologies, our editorial staffs at NCR, Global Sisters Report and EarthBeat, continue to do magnificent work, working from home. Pressing new challenges in gathering and reporting information are bringing out creative approaches and nimble responsiveness.

All NCR staff is motivated by deep commitment to the NCR mission to provide the highest quality of Catholic journalism. Each person, of course, carries the burdens of personal and family challenges in the face of lives upended by the COVID-19 virus. You are likely more familiar with the names in our editorial staffs. You are likely less familiar with the names of those who operate behind the scenes, keeping the company functioning, many required to come to the office during the week to open and sort mail, enter data, write checks, do payroll. Let me share some names: Wally Reiter, Dorothy Flemington, Velva Dewberry, Mary Kate DuBois, Jo Schierhoff, Shelia Johnson, Megan Judd, Alex Merch, Marge Gasnick and Kamin Rea keep NCR functioning. We owe them special gratitude.

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Like tens of thousands of other small companies nationwide, the coronavirus is taking a heavy toll on company finances. We operate efficiently on a bare-bones budget. Not an insignificant amount of our revenue comes through advertising. Many ads highlight colleges, retreats, conferences and other gatherings. With events canceled, advertisers have pulled long-planned-for ads. Revenues have unexpectedly fallen. As a media company, NCR continues to operate in Kansas City as an exemption within an ordinance calling for the complete or partial shutdown of small businesses.

With an exceptionally committed staff and an equally committed voluntary board of directors, NCR rests on solid ground, even if we feel tremors at the moment. We will make it through this patch. Especially with the continued support of you, our readers. We are all led by our common support for the NCR mission. We have been for decades. It is this vision, one committed to justice and founded on hope, that guides us. You and countless thousands of others have told us you depend on NCR to inform you about your church and the moral issues facing the larger human family. You tell us repeatedly NCR is your "lifeline to the church." You tell us you come to us for community and for hope. It is humbling to hear so many say this. Your connections, in turn, inspire us.

So, in support for the NCR mission, I once again ask for your assistance during this difficult time. On this Good Friday like no other, we will, once again, have come to the cross on our knees, fastening our gaze on the light and hope of Easter. This year, the Easter we pray for, the Easter that is on the other side of this global pandemic, is an Easter that will have joined us as a global family in ways yet to be fully imagined. Yes, Easter will come. This is God's promise. Yes, Easter will come. It will be an Easter, with God's help, of our own making.

There are several ways you can help us at this critical juncture.

You are welcome and encouraged to show your support through a donation, by joining NCR Forward as a member, or giving a subscription to a friend. Another option is to make a commitment now to support NCR in the future through a legacy gift. You can choose from several giving options to fit your needs and those of your family. For more information on making a planned gift to NCR, visit

NCRonline.planmylegacy.org or contact Nancy Browne at 816-968-2217, email nbrowne@ncronline.org.

[Tom Fox is NCR's CEO/president. His email address is tfox@ncronline.org.]

This story appears in the **Coronavirus** feature series. View the full series.
A version of this story appeared in the **April 17-30, 2020** print issue under the headline: Coping with the pandemic's effect at NCR.