

April  
2020

www.lutheransforlife.org

**SPECIAL EDITION****The Sanctity of Life in the Shadow of Coronavirus**

by Pastor Michael W. Salemink

What has the sanctity of life to do with pandemics and cancellations? Believe it or not, it's more relevant than ever. The Gospel of Jesus Christ belongs to just such a time as this. It prepares us for precisely these kinds of moments. Here's how we can keep speaking truth, showing love, and sharing life in the face of the coronavirus and cultural distress.

**Let's not abort the unborn.** Some will use this virus as the latest excuse to experiment with embryos for developing another vaccine or a stem-cell therapy. Do we have to let the emergency turn our little ones into nothing more than spare parts? One abortionist already advocated removing restrictions on RU486 because increased time at home equals more surprise pregnancies. Widespread dread provides the least rational and most hazardous justification for medically cannibalizing our young.

**Let's not abandon the elderly.** We can allocate healthcare resources, even in crisis, according to urgency of needs and not duration of years. Quality of life is in the eye of the beholder, which makes a poor basis for assessing survival. This outbreak already especially endangers the aged. Sacrificing them to it will embolden, not appease it.

**Reconsider the role of our bodies.** Disease transmission reminds us of some wonderful realities. A person's value means more than how attractive or productive we find her. Comfort, luxury, and indulgence do not trump everything else. There's no such thing as a personal choice or a private decision. We affect others wherever we go and whatever we do—for worse and for better. These bodies are gifts, not rights or burdens.

**Behold how defenseless and dependent we are.** But for the grace of God, we cannot sustain ourselves against the tiniest menaces. Humankind's selfishness long ago upset the harmony our Almighty Maker wove into the universe, and we have competed with creation ever since. Microscopic organisms have turned against us too ("cursed is the ground because of you"). Sin has rendered us little and feeble like an embryo, impaired and compromised as much as any hospital patient. Yet our heart beats and eyes blink—how relentlessly does the Heavenly Father preserve us!

**Take comfort that no one suffers alone.** Our Lord Jesus Christ has borne our sicknesses and carried our sorrows. He knows weeping and bleeding. The Son of God humbled Himself under hurt and obedient to death to walk its valley alongside us. His crucified forgiveness has emptied suffering of any punishment and filled it with purposes. In His hand even our pain accomplishes outcomes that far surpass its costs.

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**Let's celebrate community.** What an unprecedented opportunity we have in school closings, travel restrictions, and working from home (or furloughs). Families, locales, and countries could unite in ways our fast-paced culture doesn't usually facilitate. Lean in to the household. Play board games. Read stories aloud. Reach out to aging relatives. Catch up with old friends. Check in on isolated neighbors. Use phone, email, letters, and cards when visits become inadvisable. Engage in real conversation with your husband or wife. How can we serve those whom the quarantining affects most adversely?

**Let's do more patting on the back than finger-pointing.** Contagions can make us suspicious of each other. Distances and differences can further impede goodwill. Practice patience rather than complaining, even with government officials, and commending instead of condemning, even with overseas populations. We're going to need one another in order to overcome both this peril and its opportunistic secondary infection: disrupted relationships.

**Resist the temptation to fill the extra time with screens.** No media delivers just the facts (or distractions). They sell products and philosophies, and scares and stories sell even more than sex. Seek truth rather than news ("infotainment" which often consists mostly of rumors and exaggerations). Rather than resorting to technology and toys, dive headlong into what your mind and heart really crave—connecting with fellow human beings.

**Remember the hope of a new creation.** Whatever this world robs from us, the resurrection of the body will restore. Pray not just to be spared from sickness but to be liberated from sin. Pray not only for ourselves but for our every neighbor. Pray, watch, and await with eager anticipation the day when God shall wipe away every tear from your eyes and there will be no more disease.

**Let's demonstrate the best of humanity and make the coronavirus pandemic of 2020 the most life-affirming, Gospel-motivated event of our age!**

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For those who have had an abortion—a **Word of Hope**  
888.217.8679 [www.word-of-hope.org](http://www.word-of-hope.org)

**Since 1973: 60,754,254 abortions in America**

Source: [www.nationalrighttolife.org/2019/11/abortion-statistics-united-states-data-and-trends-3](http://www.nationalrighttolife.org/2019/11/abortion-statistics-united-states-data-and-trends-3)

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