

A Prayer for the COVID-19 Pandemic by Rev. Kris Whitby Assistant to the President—Mission and Ministry,
LCMS Northern Illinois District

Lord Jesus, You already know, but here is what we're constantly filling up on, whether through TV, talking/facetimeing with friends, being online, or through every media outlet...it's what we're hearing and seeing daily...

The virus is spreading...

The panic buying is causing shortages...

Unemployment is soaring and the economy is tanking...

We're isolated now and dealing with depression....

Medical staff and other care givers are stretched to the limit and ill-equipped/supplied to rightly deal with this crisis...

And to the heartbreak of all, the death toll in many places throughout the world is rising even as we race for a vaccine which may not come for many months...

And Lord, we seek to cope with our new circumstances.

By consuming all we can about the Coronavirus online so we can be best prepared for the uncertain...

By making sure our pantries are well-stocked...

By social distancing to regain at least some small sense of safety...

By serious reflection....

By humor...

By recreating community with the tools you've given us...

By trying to do some good to help others and remind them You're there...

By talking to You...perhaps now more than ever...acknowledging that there are moments, Lord, when we're overwhelmed by what Your world...by what our families...by what we are facing...and knowing because of our sin, we don't deserve any better...

But now this is what the LORD says – he who created you, O Jacob, he who formed you, O Israel;

“Fear not, for I have redeemed you;

I have summoned you by name; you are mine.

When you pass through the waters,

I will be with you;

And when you pass through the rivers, they will not sweep over you.

When you walk through the fire you will not be burned;

The flames will not set you ablaze.

For I am the LORD your God,

The Holy One of Israel,

Your Savior;”

- Isaiah 43:1-3a

Thank You, Lord, even in the midst of all of our uncertainties, for reminding us of who You are: our Creator, our Redeemer, our God and our Savior! And thank You for reminding us that when we pass through torrents that would overwhelm and infernos that would consume...thank You for telling us that You are with us in these things and that Your presence (for You are the One who has provided eternal rescue by Your cross and empty tomb) is THE reason we need not fear, but rather have confident hope, even as we pass through rivers and fires, for You are our Savior indeed!

And please remind us in these days Lord, that when You are with us (as Your Word dwells in us richly – Colossians 3:16), that means that, in us, You are near to the one who is next to us....

Who is scared...

Who is weary...

Who is lonely...

Who may be wondering about You as they pass through their rivers and fires...

That we might have Your heart of compassion and tell them who You are. Amen.