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# Message from Cardinal Jozef De Kesel in times of coronavirus



Joseph De Kesel

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3 MINUTES READING TIME

*With a short but penetrating message, Cardinal Jozef De Kesel, Archbishop of Mechelen-Brussels, gives everyone a heart.*

Good friends,

Sometimes things happen completely unexpectedly. Things that people thought used to be, but not anymore. And certainly not in a society as developed as ours. Nothing could be further from the truth. The coronavirus pushes us with our noses at the facts: we are and remain vulnerable people. Not just here or there, but worldwide.

Equally global is the **solidarity** that is now being demanded of all. No one should make exceptions for themselves. Not even we as church. Just as there are no purely local solutions for poverty and migration. We know that, but we mostly forget about it. We try to keep it out of our borders as much as possible.

But the virus knows no bounds. A mentality of each for itself makes us even more vulnerable.

***We're responsible for each other,  
all over the world. The earth is  
truly our common home.***

This corona crisis falls in the middle of the 40-day period, just as we prepare for Easter on Sunday after Sunday and week after week. Common celebrations are not possible now. Not even the Eucharist on Sunday. You'd think spontaneously: it would have happened better at another time. But that doesn't make much sense.

***We will experience the 40-day era  
differently this year. That's true.  
But we will therefore not  
experience him any less intensely.***

It will require additional efforts and greater creativity from each of us.

The prephphening of this Lent says it so beautifully about this forty day time: *Tijd of more commitment to praying and of greater attention for love to the neighbor.* We can't come together to pray anymore. But we can do it alone, in the family, in our religious community. Time of silence and reflection, with an attentive ear for the word of Scripture that provides the liturgy for this time. And fortunately there are also the media and especially the ecclesiastical media that help us do that.

***Now that everything needs to be  
done more in silence, this  
preparation time at Easter also  
remains a time of greater  
attention for our neighbor.***

Of course, especially now for those affected by the disease, for all who assist them and for those who investigate the virus to prevent the spread. But also for those who are poor or lonely, fleeing war and violence, for all those who are in need and knocking on our door for help. During the forty days time, the collectes for ***Fraternal Sharing*** are always held. We must not forget this solidarity either.

We will live more reclusively in these days. Sometimes it's really quarantined or in a very limited circle. We will miss the celebrations and especially the Eucharist. In that sense, too, we need to fast now. But let's not feel alone. We remain deeply connected: connected in prayer and in and global solidarity.

*And remember that in all this the Lord himself stays close to us. He is also in power this time to make a time of grace.*

+ Joseph Cardinal De Kesel

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