

*The Lock Down ...*

*Yes there is fear.*

*Yes there is isolation.*

*Yes there is panic buying.*

*Yes there is sickness.*

*Yes there is even death.*

*But,*

*They say that in Wuhan after so many years of noise*

*You can hear the birds again.*

*They say that after just a few weeks of quiet*

*The sky is no longer thick with fumes*

*But blue and grey and clear.*

*They say that in the streets of Assisi*

*People are singing to each other*

*across the empty squares,*

*keeping their windows open*

*so that those who are alone*

*may hear the sounds of family around them.*

*They say that a hotel in the West of Ireland*

*Is offering free meals and delivery to the housebound.*

*Today a young woman I know*

*is busy spreading fliers with her number*

*through the neighbourhood so that the elders may have someone to call on.*

*Today Churches, Synagogues, Mosques and Temples*

*are preparing to welcome and shelter the homeless, the sick, the weary.*

*All over the world people are slowing down and reflecting*

*All over the world people are looking at their neighbours in a new way*

*All over the world people are waking up to a new reality*

*To how big we really are.*

*To how little control we really have.*

*To what really matters. To Love.*

*So we pray and we remember that*

*Yes there is fear.*

*But there does not have to be hate.*

*Yes there is isolation.*

*But there does not have to be loneliness.*

*Yes there is panic buying.*

*But there does not have to be meanness.*

*Yes there is sickness.*

*But there does not have to be disease of the soul*

*Yes there is even death.*

*But there can always be a rebirth of love.*

*Wake to the choices you make as to how to live now.*

*Today, breathe.*

*Listen, behind the factory noises of your panic*

*The birds are singing again.*

*The sky is clearing,*

*Spring is coming,*

*And we are always encompassed by Love.*

*Open the windows of your soul*

*And though you may not be able*

*to touch across the empty square,*

*Sing.*

*- Fr. Richard Hendrick, OFM*

*March 13th 2020*