

## PRAYER / REFLECTION for JULY 2020

When a storm subsides, the air is washed clean of whatever particles of matter have been obscuring the view, and you can often see farther and more sharply than at any other time.



When this storm / pandemic clears, we may see where we were and where we should go in a new light. We may have a profoundly different sense of ourselves, our communities, our systems of production and our future.

We have withdrawn from each other to protect each other. Now, perhaps, we will appreciate the value of direct face-to-face contact more.

Although staying put is hard, maybe we will be reluctant to resume our rushing about, and something of the stillness now upon us will stay with us. We have had time to think and reflect about ourselves, our relationships and the earth. We have had to dig deep to find reasons for hope.

The sadness many have experienced is not incompatible with hope, because we are complex creatures, and because hope is not optimism that everything will be fine regardless.

Hope offers us clarity that, amid the uncertainty ahead, we will be able to cope and “all will be well”. One of the things most dangerous to this hope is the lapse into believing that everything was fine before disaster struck, and that all we need to do is return to things as they were.



Ordinary life before the pandemic was already a catastrophe of desperation and exclusion for too many human beings, an environmental and climate catastrophe, an obscenity of inequality. It is too soon to know what will emerge from this emergency, but not too soon to start looking for chances to help decide it. It is what many of us are preparing to do.

Lord help us to be people of hope, people who do not give in to hopelessness. Help us by our attitude and actions to be lights in the darkness to those around us. May we be blessed by the words of St Paul in Ephesians 1:18

*"I pray that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened in order that you may know the hope to which he has called you ...."*