

Thoughts on the Coronavirus Measures by Fr Ed

So far I have avoided expressing opinions about the government's response to the coronavirus. I would just like to propose two points for your reflection:

1. When the more extreme measures were introduced (business closures, 10 person limits, etc) we were told by government and/or health officials that the goal of these measures was to flatten the curve and avoid overloading the system. Fundamentally, that goal has been achieved in at least the vast majority of the country. Gradually and somewhat sneakily, however, these same officials have continued to uphold the measures for the sake of a very different goal: avoiding spread at all costs until a "cure" is found.

I find that subtle shift to be seriously worrisome. It's exactly the kind of propaganda induced "groupthink" that opens the door to tyranny. Even if you are completely in favor of the measures as they stand, I encourage you to think about the actions of our officials as such and evaluate those separately from your evaluation of the measures themselves.

I consider that responsible citizens have a moral obligation to recognize such abuses of authority for what they are and respond - not necessarily by ignoring the measures, but at least through the ordinary means of democracy: elections and speaking out in its various forms.

2. Reducing the risk of sickness and death in our communities is a laudable endeavor. However, it is not an absolute and never has been. Rather, it is an important consideration that must be weighed alongside other factors.

Just one example: raising the age for getting a driver's license to 25 would significantly reduce death and serious injury on a massive scale, perhaps even more so than the coronavirus measures, but we've decided that because of other factors, it wouldn't be right to do so. This means that "preventing sickness and death" is never by itself a sufficient justification for anything. It is always one (significant) factor among others, all having to do with the common good. If your primary motivation for supporting the current measures is simply "preventing sickness and death", I challenge you to widen out your view of the common good and take other factors into consideration.

That is all for now. Remember that the survival of a democracy depends upon there being a critical mass of people who live by reason and ardently seek the truth. Be part of the solution.

God bless you and keep you close to Himself.