

Gwynneville
22/03/2020

Fellow body parts (I Cor 12:20!),

Since I am stuck at home practicing social isolation in accordance with the wishes of the Parish Council and Archiishop, I am wondering why that means that I cannot relate with the other parts. After all, in our bodies the connections are by blood, tendons, connective tissue, hormones, nerves, immune cells, and pressure – actually I think that this is a fairly exhaustive list though I'm sure that Allison will tell me I've missed one. Those are the physical connections and don't include 'missing', yearning, friendship and fellowship.

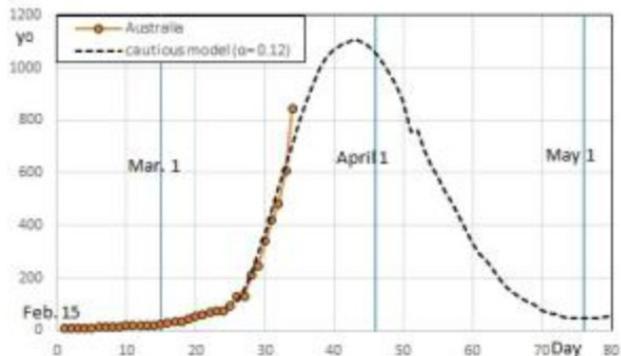
So I have decided to communicate by writing, rather than speaking. Of course if you don't want to 'talk', just stop reading!

We should talk about the virus problem as that is the big topic at present. When I was younger, so much younger than today, I never needed sorry, I'm humming the tune now ... I read a lot of science fiction. What I really loved were the books about blasting through space rather than the dark black fantasy that passes for science fiction now (think "Alien" & "Terminator" series). There was a genre of SciFi called the "Space Opera" - "2001: A Space Odyssey" is that kind of story – something far bigger than us, with us as the bit players.

One set of famous space opera literature is by Isaac Asimov and is called the Foundation Series. It's underlying theme is the science of social history which is actually a mathematical prediction of how crowds of people act, that is individuals are unpredictable but masses of people can be very tightly predicted. The current crisis makes me think of this because the pattern of viral spread is exactly following mathematical patterns.

A UOW professor (not me) has been doing far more sophisticated mathematics than mine and has come up with two patterns of spread – the careless and the cautious. We are fitting the cautious pattern. Here is the graph that he has produced showing the actual numbers and his mathematical predictions. Of course, countries are going to be a mixture of cautious and careless. So time will

tell. He is predicting that we top out around the 1000-1100 mark where as I think that we are headed to at least 2200.

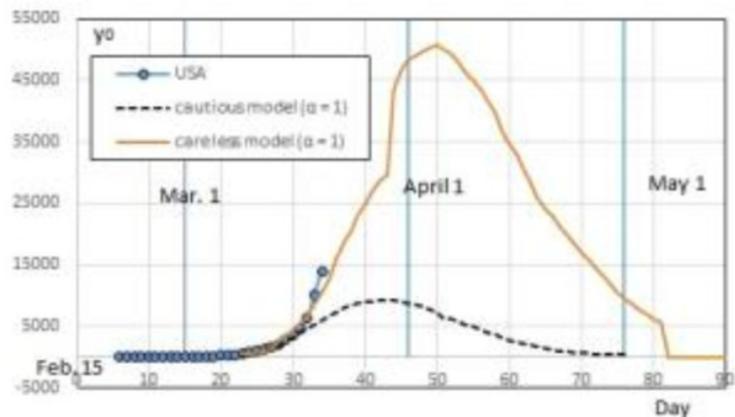


But whatever the number, I encourage you to hold firm. This time of social isolation does not need to be one of spiritual isolation. In fact we have now lost the excuse of busyness which usually prevents us from reading the Scriptures every day. John Thew has a group of us doing that together since March 1. It's not too late to catch up!

We have been doing two chapters of Genesis each day and I must say, it reads like a best seller particularly in the Message paraphrase version. SO many bad boys and bad decisions. You can actually read that version either using a web site like Biblegateway on your computer or the YouVersion app on your smartphone (being used for the daily reading to do the Bible in one year). To pass the time, you could read one book each day. There are plenty of short ones!

I have been in touch with our friends Dan & Nancy in the USA. I fear that they are in for a worse time than us. You can see that the USA is already following the trend of the 'careless' curve rather than the careful curve. As a nation the Americans have a great belief that they have the best health system in the world. This is certainly true at the pointy end of medical

advancement, but they have major deficits in population coverage. Any attempt at general medical coverage is termed "socialised medicine" and linked with governmental rationing. I don't know about you but that's not really what OUR public health system looks like. The issue for the USA observer is the waiting times for elective operations.



As a result, the US health system is driven to make a profit. Not really the system you want when there is a viral pandemic threatening to overwhelm every medical facility in the country. After all, who will pay? I expect that you will see some horrendous stories coming out of the US about patient selection.

On to more serious matters. If you talk to Brendan in the next few days, be gentle. His beloved Cats (Geelong) were given a fairly good beating by the GWS Giants yesterday. It didn't really help that there was no-one at the stadium to watch.

Due to a complete lack of interest in the sport, I don't know what the Dragons and Roosters have achieved this weekend. I usually rely on John's sermon and Ian W's apparel to provide a clue!

Unfortunately, the basketball has finished and with a lot of controversy during the finals. The Hawks however have had a firm grip on the wooden spoon since about half way through the season. They were valiant in defeat and di manage to win the one really important game – Sydney Kings in Wollongong!

I think that I have just about exhausted all of the topics that I can come up with myself. I pray that you have patience and calmness to wait out the necessary time. Remember that we still have phone, Skype, WhatsApp, Facetime, etc, etc, and above all, we have the God who says that He is sufficient for us.

To those in the know, De Colores,
To those not, may God make your self-imposed incarceration useful and rejuvenate you,

Your brother in Christ,

Andrew (Miller)