



# MORNING PRAYER DEVOTIONAL

TUESDAY, MARCH 17, 2020

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*Readings: Exodus 24; Matthew 22:34 – 23:12; Psalm 40*

“Moses came and told the people all the words of the Lord and all the rules. And all the people answered with one voice and said, ‘All the words that the Lord has spoken we will do’” (Exodus 24:3).

If you have been reading from the Daily Office Lectionary, you know that we have been reading the Law of Moses given to him by the Lord in the previous chapters of Exodus, beginning with the Decalogue (chapter 20). Some of the laws pertain to care and compassion for one another, like, “If you meet your enemy’s ox or his donkey going astray, you shall bring it back to him” (23:4), and others deal with matters that are culturally foreign to us, like various aspects of slavery (most of chapter 21). Some of the laws sound morally sound and the basis for a loving society, while others seem a bit strange and are difficult to translate into 21st century categories of thought.

Reading these several chapters of Exodus reminds me of the various regulations, codes and recommendations coming to us from government authorities regarding the COVID19 virus. Some sound reasonable to us, while others don’t seem to translate well to our modern ears. It’s important to remember the ultimate rationale behind laws, rules and regulations. In a healthy society, they are there to (1) protect and safeguard (especially the more vulnerable) and (2) to create a sense of solidarity with one another in the context of a single society, and all to the glory of God.

We are all making significant decisions about the way we live in these times. I am offering this devotional – something I would not normally do – because my care and concern for you in these days prompts me to offer my gifts and skills in supporting you in these difficult days. I am writing this devotional from my home study and will be spending most of my time working from my study for the next few weeks. This is part of how we can contribute to a more compassionate society. I also find myself washing my hands whenever I am near a sink, no matter what. When I wash my hands, I wash vigorously, getting between the fingers, the webbing of my skin between my thumb and index finger, and the finger tips. I sing to myself “Old MacDonald Had a Farm,” using “ducks” as my farm animal, and don’t quit scrubbing my hands until the song is over. Several generations from now, someone reading this devotional may find my reasons for writing a devotional to you rather noble; they may find me singing “Old MacDonald” to myself while washing my hands strange and unintelligible. Both, however, are expressions of the same thing: my effort to contribute faithfully as a steward of the Lord in being “my brother’s keeper.”

I imagine we will have more regulations coming down the pipe in the next several weeks; some will seem reasonable to us, others will seem silly. May God give us grace to see His call to mutual care and love behind them all, and may we, by God’s grace, do “all the words the Lord has spoken.”



– Fr. Marc