**LOCKDOWN**

**by - Fr. Richard Hendrick, OFM**

**March 13th 2020**

**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.**