



April 20, 2020

Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall trouble or hardship or persecution or
famine or nakedness or danger or sword?

(Romans 8:35)

Statement by the Faith and Life Sciences Reference Group on COVID-19

A message of gratitude and encouragement from The Canadian Council of Churches to the scientific and medical communities working to eliminate COVID-19 and its effects, and to the general public who trust and rely on their efforts

COVID-19 is certainly presenting as one of the dangers in life to which St Paul refers, a global challenge which is putting all our public health resources to the test, as well as our spiritual, mental, emotional, economic and physical resources. Where is the face of Christ in this crisis?

Focusing on COVID-19, we whole-heartedly agree with the message of The Canadian Council of Churches and other faith leaders in [*Hope, Gratitude and Solidarity: A Message to Canadians from Religious Leaders in Canada in Response to the COVID-10 Pandemic*](#):

We earnestly pray for healing, for the continued efforts to relieve human suffering, and for perseverance throughout these challenging times. ... We respond with an abundance of hope, gratitude and solidarity, trusting in the loving and ever merciful God, the source of all hope.

As the Faith and Life Sciences Reference Group of The Canadian Council of Churches, we try to cultivate faith perspectives on biotechnology. Over the years we have reflected on both the risks and benefits of new technologies, but today we are struck by the dedication and cooperation of virologists, biochemists, epidemiologists, and many other scientists working urgently in laboratories across Canada and the world to develop tests, treatments, and vaccines to protect us from the ongoing ravages of COVID-19. We know that developing a rapid test may save lives by earlier detection than is currently possible.

We are moved by the sense of duty and self-sacrificial love shown by those healthcare workers who care for those afflicted by COVID-19, risking their own health and safety. Those of us who must stay home to avoid spreading the disease can do our part by praying for their protection and success as they work tirelessly for our common good. Their efforts demonstrate both solidarity and cooperation, and it is heartening to see those virtues in practice in so many countries and in so many ways.



In the common letter noted above, we are reminded that, "In spite of present sufferings, which can seem overwhelming at times, the flames of hope cannot be extinguished. Love, which gives life its fullest meaning, continues to seek out the common good in spite of individual difficulties". The Pauline text asks, "Who can separate us from the love of Christ?" Our faith in Jesus Christ demands hope and love, and, in this case, gratitude towards those health care workers, scientists, and biotechnologists who are using their gifts to overwhelm the suffering resulting from this pandemic affliction, and we are grateful to the Lord our God for His countless Blessings revealed in the contributions of *all* people to the therapy, care and love of others during this crisis.

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