

*‘Just some thought on COVID and God - Nadya Langelotz*

1. I guess the biggest thing I’ve started to recognize, and become more attuned to, is the kind of touch that extends beyond physical touch. Now that there is suddenly an abundance of space between us, how do we choose to fill it? I’ve become more aware of the ways I am touched by what I read (an email, a poem, something for class) and what I see (someone running past me on Wellington Crescent in the morning or pigeons perching on the balcony outside my bedroom window). Most poignantly, however, are the ways I’ve felt physically touched, without actually being touched. This happens rather consistently during the afternoon when I walk across the street to Vimy Ridge Park, sit on a picnic table, and allow the sunlight to touch me. You can feel it, the sun. The heat. The birth of spring. And we’re all feeling it; it’s why at 8am when I run, the whole city is outside.
2. I hope we become more attentive to space. Right now, the world is at a crossroads where many people are asking the same question: Now that there is suddenly an abundance of space between us, how will I choose to fill it? And this attentiveness to spaces will look different across the board, but I hope we don’t forget the possibility of space. Maybe this time is a space for creative projects, and structured routine. Perhaps this space came at a time of needed rest. Or, for people still working, for the nurses and doctors, and childcare workers, I hope they notice the lack of space. For all of us, is this a space where God has entered into? When we arise from this “wilderness”, I hope we can collectively understand the grace inherent to empty space, the gift of being lost, if only to be found again. I hope we will be found, by each other, and by God.
3. As people of faith, it is not difficult to connect our current time, with its abundance of space, to the “wilderness” Jesus walked during the 40 days of lent. First, how poignant that the world has been guided into a similar kind of wilderness during this time. Secondly, I am led to questions of preparation. What am I, what is CMU, what is the Church, what is the world, preparing for during this time? Continuing along the parallel of Jesus’ preparation, which was toward a death and then ultimately, a resurrection, I follow the same path: what are the various deaths we are experiencing today? Well, people *are* dying, people are disconnected and alone, jobs are being lost, and those who *are* working are exhausted. Which leads me to the last, and perhaps most important question: how do these deaths prepare us for an eventual resurrection? In this time of lent, how do we prepare for the resurrection of Jesus, and the resurrection of life after our own space of wilderness?