



Reflection from Deacon Ross 5/3/2020

I feel like I am sitting through a very long and boring “B” movie. The plot goes round and round, and no end is in sight. Under some circumstances I would get up and leave when the experience became unbearable. This time I don’t have that option. I am part of the cast of this movie, the Coronavirus Pandemic Stay at Home Story; brought to you by Government Productions. Days are long. Activities are limited. If only I could get in the car and join others for a cup of coffee and conversation at Equal Minded Café on Troost. But that isn’t going to happen.

Oh, I’ve got plenty to occupy myself with at home - like writing this column; checking my email, Facebook, What’s App, Messenger and other electronic communications too many times a day; dealing with a few years of filing upstairs and tables and benches full of tools, wires, screws and bolts – and far too many other assorted things in the basement. But somehow, these activities don’t remove the sense of endless isolation from friends -and even family- that this seemingly plotless movie has me cast in. Enter the Gospel for this Sunday’s Mass. Jesus says, “I am the gate....” Jesus, please be for me the gate OUT of this situation. “Whoever enters through me will be saved and will come in and go out and find pasture.” Yes, Lord, that’s it! Be that gate to lead me to new pasture... and other sheep.

But not so quick. “The gatekeeper,” the shepherd, “opens [the gate]... and the sheep hear his voice, as the shepherd calls his own sheep by name and leads them out.” Oh, I see, I must listen for your call, Jesus, and then follow you to where I should go. Doggone it. I was hoping you’d just leave the gate open and I would run loose whenever I wanted! But no, you’ll call me. Wait a minute. If I listen, maybe I hear your voice even now. Maybe you are calling me to endure this Stay at Home Story for a purpose. Maybe your call is about my keeping safe, helping others keep safe; even using my time to take care of those upstairs and basement things that I have put off forever. Oh my, that’s not what I had hoped for! “I am the good shepherd.” So good you call me to the right things at the right time, though I may not see it that way. At that really right time you

will call me to go out to familiar and missed pasture where I will ultimately find “life and have it more abundantly.” In your time, not mine.

Blessings, Deacon Ross