

<https://ihmsisters.org/fostering-spirituality/spirituality/reflections/>

May 2020

Our world is collectively grieving.
Holding each other up in a virtual hammock of prayer
Embracing a kaleidoscope of feelings amid a myriad of losses
routines, worship, work, connection, security, freedoms
And most profoundly, thousands of lives
Each one a single story
a life unexpectedly ended
setting into motion waves of emptiness and sadness.

We've been thrust into uncertain waiting
in an unfolding saga with no script.

There are no shortcuts.
We can't pole vault through the pain.
We can't bypass the grief.
Our lives are different.
Our world is changed
And things will never be the same.

So name your pain.
Give witness to each other's grief without judgment
Surviving the pandemic will leave each of us
Forever changed in different ways.

Keep breathing deeply.
Keep reaching out to others.
We have not lost the ability to make meaningful moments.

Eventually we will utter a collective sigh
Having escaped the hand of death of this indiscriminate disease.
It is then that our choices will take on new meaning.
For it will be within our power
To put back into our lives only that which
Truly expresses our values and lessons learned.
Much of what we thought we couldn't live without
now put aside
has birthed a deeper understanding
of wholeness and happiness
of respect for life ... all life ... not just my own.

Kathy Onderbeke, IHM