

## **Better things to come**

Outside my front door the trees are beginning to bud, the primroses are out, and the camelia is bursting into flower, signs that Spring is on the way. It feels strange that just as nature is waking up, our human world is shutting down. Public institutions closing, restaurants and bars empty, city streets deserted, travel drastically curtailed, an eerie quiet everywhere. It reminds me of *The Lion, The Witch and the Wardrobe* by C. S. Lewis, in which Narnia is in the grip of the White Witch, and so it is “always winter, never Christmas”. The fun has gone out of our world for the moment, and like the animals in Narnia we sit in our burrows waiting for better times.

But whatever the coronavirus is doing to our world, we know that there are other forces at work. The renewing power of nature cannot be stopped, the dawn of spring has come, and will be followed by the warmth of summer. Some years ago the then Chancellor of St Andrew's University spoke these words to his students at the end of their term:

“Each evening from my home in the hills 300 feet above the village of Ballantrae I see the sun setting beyond the long peninsula of Kintyre, knowing that it will rise again behind me next morning over the hill of Beneraird. Every autumn as the days grow shorter I know that the spring will come again with all its welcome signs. These signs of the faith that is instinctive in all of us, these “intimations of immortality” in Wordsworth's felicitous phrase, reassure us with their rhythm and their constancy, and fortify our sure and certain hope of better things to come.”

The Venerable David Meara

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