

## Lockdown

Yes there is fear.  
Yes there is isolation.  
Yes there is panic buying.  
Yes there is sickness.  
Yes there is even death.  
But,

They say that in Wuhan after so many years  
of noise  
You can hear the birds again.  
They say that after just a few weeks of quiet  
The sky is no longer thick with fumes -  
But blue and grey and clear.

They say that in the streets of Assisi  
People are singing to each other  
across the empty squares,  
keeping their windows open  
so that those who are alone  
may hear the sounds of family around them.

They say that a hotel in the West of Ireland  
Is offering free meals and delivery to the  
housebound.

Today a young woman I know  
is busy spreading fliers with her number  
through the neighbourhood  
So that the elders may have someone to call  
on.

Today Churches, Synagogues, Mosques and  
Temples  
are preparing to welcome and shelter the  
homeless,  
the sick, the weary

All over the world people are slowing down  
and  
reflecting  
All over the world people are looking at their  
neighbours in a new way  
All over the world people are waking up to a  
new  
reality  
To how big we really are.  
To how little control we really have.  
To what really matters  
To Love.  
So we pray and we remember that

Yes there is fear.  
But there does not have to be hate.  
Yes there is isolation.  
But there does not have to be loneliness.  
Yes there is panic buying.  
But there does not have to be meanness.  
Yes there is sickness.  
But there does not have to be disease of the  
soul  
Yes there is even death.  
But there can always be a rebirth of love.  
Wake to the choices you make as to how to  
live now.  
Today, breathe.  
Listen, behind the factory noises of your  
panic  
The birds are singing again  
The sky is clearing,  
Spring is coming  
And we are always encompassed by Love.  
Open the windows of your soul  
And though you may not be able  
to touch across the empty square,  
Sing.

Brother Richard OFM Cap  
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