

## **“Forced to be patient?”**

*“For we know that the whole creation has been groaning together in the pains of childbirth until now. And not only the creation, but we ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies. For in this hope we were saved. Now hope that is seen is not hope. For who hopes for what he sees? But if we hope for what we do not see, we wait for it with patience.” - Romans 8:22-25*

One of the things that many of us are wrestling with is the feeling of uncertainty regarding the future. We know that things will eventually get better, but we aren't quite sure what that will look like. More importantly, we're not sure when things will get back to normal. I was lamenting this to a friend just recently. Questions have been running through my mind like: When will church resume in a normal way? Will this push back ordination this summer? How will I face these kinds of dilemmas when I'm in the parish just a few short months from now?

The truth is, none of us knows when things will be completely back to normal. We don't know when the next time we will be able to gather together will be. We don't know when the next time we'll be fully comfortable at a large social gathering will be. Yet, what St. Paul assures us is that it is times of crisis like this when hope can take the place of uncertainty. Disease and distress remind us that it isn't just us waiting for an end to the current pandemic. Instead, the whole of creation is groaning under these pains, looking forward to the time when Christ will return. While we are waiting and being forced to be patient during the current pandemic, perhaps we can be reminded of the Christian hope that Jesus will one day raise us from the dead, perfected and glorious. Our faith and hope then can aid us as we patiently await that time when Christ will make all things new, including creation itself. For now, we know that we can remain patient in suffering, because Christ first remained patient unto death. Our Easter hope waits patiently then, even as it is guided by our Savior to the empty tomb of the resurrection.

In Christ,

Seminarian Keating