

COVID-19 demands we all make sacrifices for common welfare

By Rev. Dr. Andy Burnette | Rabbi John A. Linder | The Rev. Martha Seaman | The Rev. Hunter Ruffin - April 1, 2020

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A cyclist passes a "Health Advisory" sign on March 18, 2020, in Miami Beach, Florida. Photo by Cliff Hawkins | Getty Images

We are glad that Gov. Doug Ducey at last has [issued a stay-at-home order](#). It will help keep the people of Arizona safe. It's imperative that we all do everything possible to go above and beyond the requirements of the order. We are a state who closed our doors to gathered worship two weeks ago, and we fear for our community.

The lives and well-being of the most vulnerable are at stake. Our health care workers and first responders deal with the COVID-19 spread. They are already under-supplied with the specialized safety equipment they need, while the virus moves in its harm's way. Many are expecting to become ill and are making plans to stay distant from their own families out of their vocation. We should stay home for them.

We are concerned for those workers who produce, transport, stock, and sell our food and essential goods. These workers, but their risk and sacrifice provide the rest of us the ability to remove ourselves from normal activities like pharmacies and gas stations, among others. We need to reward them for this extraordinary service and to en

them and their families.

The governor's "Stay Home, Stay Healthy, Stay Connected" order still loosely defines essential businesses as shops. These employees would have to continue reporting to work, catering to non-essential needs, at great spreading it to others. That's in no one's interest.

Perhaps we have never seen a time that so clearly illustrates how the seemingly unconnected actions of an individual have consequences for others. Our personal inconvenience or temporary hardship actually contributes to the damage to an economy, but not a lost human life. The images of New York's hospitals are harrowing, and they predict a similar fate for us.

So, we, as clergy leaders of Valley Interfaith Project, ask our state leaders to reassess what we deem absolutely essential. There's still time for improvements to this order that would diminish the spread of this epidemic.

Every hour matters.

Many of our clergy colleagues already have congregants and family members who have become sick and can't clearly indicate that they have been infected by the virus. To date, more than 1,300 Arizonans have contracted the virus. Dozens have died.

These numbers will seem paltry next week, and we're all wondering how many funerals we'll be called to officiate.

Let's stay home, be safe, and be smart.

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