



## [ENGAGING GOD IN THE CORONAVIRUS WILDERNESS \(LENT COURSE 2020:2\)](#)

To *engage* with God, means to participate and to become involved in what God is doing rather than only asking God to be involved in what we are doing (not totally wrong by itself). But by pushing God to be part of our plans we try to control him, define him, and dictate his actions.

This can be seen most clearly in the language sometimes used in formulating both our private personal prayers and the public intercessions. The push to describe the exact procedure God has to follow in order to meet the needs of our world is often evident.

We live in a world where planning what actions to take, or not take, and what decisions to implement, or defer, is a key strength for any individual or organization. A good planner knows what to expect but could this always be the case when considering engagement with God? Does God abide by our plans or we fit into his design? **(Prov 16.9)** A man's mind plans his way, but the Lord directs his steps.

**Take a little moment to highlight any 6 things you achieved as a result of good planning**

**Also take time to highlight 4 challenges that you met as a result of inadequate planning**

The act of following Jesus Christ or Discipleship goes beyond planning or lack of it. Every faithful Disciple *expects the unexpected* from God (Mary-Elizabeth Mulino Moore). As you take to bed each evening what are you expecting to happen? As you wake up to a new day each morning what are you expecting? On each day you go out to work or school or even shopping do you hold any expectations? For the average human being “**expecting**” is very important. We are a people who **expect**! We **expect** the Lord to be in our midst. We **expect** the Lord to be present alongside our life journey, to act, and to transform. Imagine the voices calling upon God and **expecting** him to deliver the World from disease, epidemics and pandemics, poverty, political strife, war and conflict, and effects of natural disasters that are life threatening.

Getting closer home, near and distant, the World's human community is **expecting** deliverance from the Coronavirus threat without delay. Governments are **expected** to protect their citizens from contracting the virus as much as the authorities in every land are **expecting** everyone to behave and act responsibly at this time. There are great **expectations** for the intervention of the Almighty sooner than yesterday from diverse religious communities made up of people of different ethnicities. With one “common enemy” destroying humanity, the voices of prayer are being raised and continue to rise in **expectation** of an immediate quick solution.

Within the Christian calendar, Lent 2020, coincides with the alarming spread of the Coronavirus. The wilderness experience that our Lord Jesus Christ went through is not far from us at this time.

**Read Luke 4:1-14, Matthew 4:1-11 and Mark 1:11-13.** Reflect and make short notes on the following issues:

Identify three ways in which Jesus was tempted.

What did the Tempter expect Jesus to do and what did Jesus expect God to do for him?

Jesus engaged with the Tempter and with God. Identify ways in which he did this.

In which ways does the season of Lent remind us to acknowledge that we live in a broken world and show us the need to engage with God through acts of love or charity, prayer and almsgiving?

Suggest some ways in which Christians can be **expected** to engage with God and cope with the **unexpected** Coronavirus pandemic: (a) individually, (b) as part of the local Church, (c) in the neighbourhood

*May God the Almighty and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ walk us through this wilderness experience of the Coronavirus during Lent 2020 by giving us hope, humility, trust and discipline to obey him. Let God know loudly and silently the urgent answers that we are expecting from him. May all the faithful followers of Jesus Christ also discern what God is expecting from humanity amid the Coronavirus wilderness. Amen. M. M. 2020*

**Fr. Michael Mbona, 19/03/2020**