

Dear Church leaders and brothers and sister,

I am a family doctor in Bowmanville. During this unprecedented crisis in our country, I am pleading with you to stand together as one voice to intercede for all the people in your own local area, your area local hospitals, your area nursing homes, and all the patients suffering because of COVID-19 virus and all the fall outs as a result of these shutdowns. Would you consider coming together with other brothers and sisters to dedicate at least 1 hour to pray for Canada/Hong Kong/the world in the next 2 weeks.

I read this article below on March 25, 2020. I had personally experienced self-isolation in room away from my family for 8 days because I developed symptoms of cough after travel. Even though I tested negative, the whole experience made me realize how alone one can feel when suffering from COVID-19 and unable to have human contact from a loved one. I realize that the healthcare workers are working in the front line 24/7 and the patients are suffering from the disease 24/7. After healthcare workers return home from work, (if this is allowed, certain countries required the workers to stay on site) physical distancing is still a requirement so that they can protect their loved ones from potential infection or vice versa. Presently, we are told that this disease has no effective treatment.

From Dr. Julian Urban, a 38 year-old serving in a hospital in Lombardy, Italy:

---LIGHT IN A DOCTOR'S DARKEST NIGHTMARE---

Never in my darkest nightmares did I imagine that I would see and experience what has been going on in Italy in our hospital the past three weeks. The nightmare flows, and the river gets bigger and bigger. At first, a few patients came, then dozens, and then hundreds. Now, we are no longer doctors, but sorters who decide who should live and who should be sent home to die, though all these patients paid Italian health taxes throughout their lives.

Until two weeks ago, my colleagues and I were atheists. It was normal because we are doctors. We learned that science excludes the presence of God. I laughed at my parents going to church.

Nine days ago, a 75-year-old pastor was admitted into the hospital. He was a kind man. He had serious breathing problems. He had a Bible with him and impressed us by how he read it to the dying as he held their hand. We, doctors, were all tired, discouraged, psychologically and physically finished. When we had time, we listened to him.

We have reached our limits. We can do no more. People are dying every day. We are exhausted. We have two colleagues who have died, and others that have been infected. We realized that we needed to start asking God for help. We do this when we have a few free minutes. When we talk to each other, we cannot believe that, though we were once fierce atheists, we are now daily in search of peace, asking the Lord to help us continue so that we can take care of the sick.

Yesterday, the 75-year-old pastor died. Despite having had over 120 deaths here in 3 weeks, we were destroyed. He had managed, despite his condition and our difficulties, to bring us a PEACE that we no longer had hoped to find. The pastor went to the Lord, and soon we will follow him if matters continue like this.

I haven't been home for 6 days. I don't know when I ate last. I realize my worthlessness on this earth. I want to use my last breath to help others. I am happy to have returned to God while I am surrounded by the suffering and death of my fellow men.

The amount of human suffering with this deadly pestilence that affected every part of the world is just unspeakable. This is the work of the Enemy seeking to destroy human life that God has created and whom He loves. The good news is that Jesus has already conquered death.

On Wednesday night, I was reflecting on a friend's prayer asking for God's forgiveness for our Canadian churches because as churches, we have lost our voice and we were counted as non-essential services. At same time, God gave me a distinct impression that our churches are to rise up for our God Almighty and His Kingdom. We are no longer supposed to just keep the prayers within our church community. We need to make it known to the world.

The article impressed upon me that the healthcare workers, first in Wuhan, now in Italy and the US are on the front line fighting a war on behalf of the patients without much of a break. The word of the priest gave the doctors and the patients comfort and peace. Let us unite together to let the frontline health care workers and the patients (whether in hospitals or nursing homes or isolated at home) know that they do not have to fight this fight alone. We are standing by them and supporting them in prayer. Let us pray for those who are heart-broken because they lost their loved ones and those who are suffering because of job losses. Let us not forget all those suffering around the world. The intention is to cover Canada/Hong Kong and the world in prayer 24/7 for the next 2 weeks. It is drastic, but extraordinary time takes extraordinary measures. This does not have to be onerous if several local churches band together to pray in that way. If healthcare workers are working non-stop like that in Italy and the US or anywhere around the world, I think they would be encouraged to know that there is a prayer covering over them. We should not wait till we reach that state of crisis in Canada/Hong Kong before we start pressing into the Lord for mercy.

Psalm 91:14-15

"Because he loves me," says the Lord, "I will rescue him;

I will protect him, for he acknowledges my name.

¹⁵He will call on me, and I will answer him;

I will be with him in trouble,

I will deliver him and honor him.

I have included a google link to a virtual sign-up sheet that you can sign up to commit to pray for one-hour time slot. Feel free to sign up for more than one slot. If you do not want to use your full name in the google public document, please just use your initials. Mark down the time that you have signed up for in your own calendar and pray for that hour.

<https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/16181uVm7cnYYHm4plwKPDpfqdqCfH1MsyCDnG29TU-U/edit?usp=sharing>

Churches can consider writing to the communication officers of local hospitals to let them know that we are covering the patients and their staff in prayer 24/7 as they are fighting on our behalf 24/7. This 24/7 prayer will be sustained for 14 days starting from April 5, 2020. These next 2 weeks are crucial in flattening the curve of the pandemic in Canada and we can pray for Hong Kong not to have a second wave.

I have included a PDF prayer guide that outlines some of the prayer needs that I can think of. Please feel free to add your own.

I will ask you to pass this onto your pastors/friends/fellow church members to consider. May God have mercy on us. Let us humble ourselves and seek His face. May He hear our prayers and heal our land.

May God's peace be with you,

Elaine Ho
Family doctor in Bowmanville, Ontario, Canada