

a common endeavour

Heather Gilbert reflects on the ways in which the nation and the whole world are coming together to respond to COVID-19

Living in unprecedented times calls for unprecedented measures by us all. Whether we like it or not, we are all part of a global village fighting to put out the COVID-19 fire that is razing communities to the ground and sparking new hot spots anywhere and everywhere. There is no smoke without fire, as the saying goes. This couldn't be truer of the unrelenting crisis in which we find ourselves. Regardless of where the coronavirus began, its voracious tentacles continue to spread north, south, east and west, having no respect for gender, age, socio-economic state, culture or faith.

The nursing response to the global pandemic of COVID-19 has been nothing short of awe-inspiring. Where would we be without so many wonderfully dedicated nurses who give selflessly of themselves and their time, putting themselves, and subsequently their families, at great risk whilst doing so? Healthcare workers on the frontline are becoming exhausted, some even sleeping in hospital corridors so that they can return to work when needed. In the worst-hit areas like Italy, nurses and doctors are dying! The ultimate sacrifice.

On Sunday 5th March 2020, Queen Elizabeth II made a televised speech to 'all the nations', a rare event, being only the fourth time during her reign that she has given such an unscheduled address. Her Majesty expressed her support and encouragement to all citizens of the United Kingdom, and indeed, around the world. She stated, *'This time we will join with nations across the globe in a common endeavour, using the great advances of science and our compassion to heal. We will succeed ... and that success will belong to every one of us.'*

The caring and 'compassion to heal' practised by nurses around the world will undoubtedly help to move us forward, with hope for the future. We owe so much to so few.

If my people, who are called by my name, will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and I will forgive their sin and will heal their land. Now my eyes will be open, and my ears attentive to the prayers offered in this place. (2 Chronicles 7: 14-15)

Heather Gilbert is an Australian nurse writing this blog originally for Nurses Christian Fellowship International - NCFI - at neci.org/a-common-endeavour