**Covid-19 in a Time of Climate Crisis**

At our last Māori mass in Taitoko/Levin we named and blessed three kōhatu mauri or life-force stones. This is a traditional Māori practice for helping people focus and ground their intentions.

Our three kōhatu mauri called Te Whenua, Ngā Wai and Te Tuarangi, reperesnted our land, our waters and our universe and heavens . The kōhatu when blessed were given the task of embodying for our community a collection of concerns and hopes.

The kōhatu Whenua was tasked with holding the coronavirus within the context of the larger issues facing our earth community. We named inequality of income, our climate crisis, our biodiversity crisis, our over-consumption/waste crisis, our race and hate crisis, our refugee and wars crisis and our housing crisis.

The kōhatu Wai was tasked with holding the coronavirus within the context of the many issues facing the waters of our world. We put into this stone our concerns for the world’s oceans, in particular their warming and acidification. We included our world’s lakes, rivers, streams and springs along with seasonal rains.

The kōhatu Tuarangi was tasked with embodying all that is sacred, and the mysterious immensity of our heavens. We acknowledged the human community, and all of Creation, as an unfolding journey of evolution.

In blessing these stones we honoured their shape and weight and all they represent for us, we commended them into the goodness and grace of God, in hope of their guidance as we journey into uncertain territory.

Our coronavirus, like everything and everyone in our world, exists in a context. The ultimate context is that everything is connected, everything is a gift and promise of our Creator. The kōhatu mauri remind us of the wider ecosystems of life in which everything has its place. The coronavirus is with us in a steadily warming world, a world where temperate winters are getting shorter and milder. Warmer conditions and shorter winters mean conditions become optimal for certain creatures to thrive. A warmer world means conditions everywhere are changing, and in some cases collapsing. World wilderness areas are warming, especially ice packs, glacial zones and tundra regions. In cooler times these places had greater integrity, ecosystems were more balanced and checked. In our time of climate crisis, we have entered into imbalances of many types due to habitat loss and unpredictable weather patterns. These imbalances mean less stability and greater likelihood of disease outbreaks.

We also live in a world chock-full of people. A good number of affluent people are now *global citizens*, they have the means to travel across seas, borders and landmasses regularly. A biologist once commented, that not only are human beings full of microbial life and dependent on them, the microbes invented us in order to get around! In a densely populated, urbanized and polluted world, microbes find themselves with ingredients and conditions enabling them to flourish.

The human community is hunkering down during this pandemic, to see it out, and in many cases in order to survive. This is necessary and wise given our threat levels. Many will want to return to business-as-usual lifestyles when the pandemic is over. The ingredients and conditions that have enabled this crisis may be easily forgotten and overlooked. Opportunities that have opened for us, discussions we needed to have will be passed up.

In this global pandemic we are displaying to each other that we care and are able to respond radically. We are altering our lives in response to changing circumstances. A similar responsiveness is needed at all levels and everywhere to address the climate crisis and its deeper underlying causes and calls.

Ecological commentators are reminding us that this is an important moment of choice. It is an opportunity to pause, reflect and reset. The more our world sinks into uncertainty and fear, the greater the opportunities to be compassionate and present. We can even begin the great task of re-imagining our civilization. All of this can happen in our global moment of pause and reflection, because what’s before us is the possibility of genuine reconnection to the Source of all life.

We are being called to muster all the awareness and presence we are capable of, doing this we will lean into the future wanting to come to be through us. We will find the resourcefulness to make the changes like a clean energy transition in support of a genuinely life-sustaining society. We will name and address many other transitions we have to make in order to drawdown our harms and enter a time of full renewal.

**Prayer for an Emerging Future**

Wellspring of Compassion,

Container of all life,

Join us as we lean into a future coming to be through our humble efforts.

Lead us into your emerging future.

Empower us as we drawdown our harms.

Transfigure our despairs,

may they become the fertile fields of a world made new.

We invoke your Good Spirit to enfold everything in a bounty of blessing.

Open to us the life-force of all that lives,

encourage us,

teach us the art of co-creation in your world.

Whaea nui o te Taiao katoa, inoi mō mātou.

Mother of the New Creation, pray for us.

Peter Healy sm