

“Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died.”

John Magu - fuli aged 61, was a keen and sincere Christian. In May this year he died from Covid 19. He was a skeptic of the disease, and had claimed that after 3 days of prayer and fasting it had been eradicated from the country in which he lived. He also thought that the pandemic was a western conspiracy against his people.

John Magu - fuli was an African, from Tanzania. He was their President.

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In the Christian US of A, one evangelical Christian radio host in the south, said on air that the vaccine roll out was “a form of government control of people.” Another host released a song entitled “The Vaxmann” as an anti-vaccine stunt, another declared himself “Mr Anti Vax,” another urged his listeners not to be vaccinated.

In August this year ... all 4 of these men died of Coronavirus.

Fox News, home to a huge evangelical Christian following, is a TV network where some of its biggest names intentionally, actively, promote misinformation, as a political strategy to undermine the Biden administration. One of them saying, vaccine mandates were to expose “free thinkers, sincere Christians and men with high testosterone.”

The state of Alabama’s population, is on course to shrink for the first time ever, because of the high number of Covid deaths this year.

The Governor of Florida is offering a \$5000 bonus to any anti vax police who want to move to the state and work. Florida is the second most popular destination for people retiring in the US. The highest risk population of any, for getting Covid 19.

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Around the world, Melbourne has just emerged from 263 days of lockdown. We have lost our battle with elimination. Cases are rising again in France and out of control in Russia. Papua New Guinea’s health system has collapsed. They have less than 1% doubled vaccinated.

No one knows how many people have died on the continent of Africa, because no one is counting. They say 300,000 have died in India, but experts believe the number could easily be 10 times that. Some senators in Brazil want President Bolsonaro indicted for crimes against humanity, for his government’s abysmal covid response. Yet this week he claimed that people in the UK, who had received two coronavirus vaccine doses, were developing Aids faster than expected.

At least 180,000 health care workers, have died around the world due to Covid.

In Iran there are over 50,000 children who have lost at least one parent to the disease.

“Lord, if you had been here, my mother and father would not have died.”

Today is All Saints Day. It is traditionally the day we remember those whom we have known, who have died in the Christian faith. But this morning I thought it would be good to remember everyone. All the Muslims, Buddhists, Hindu’s, Sheiks, Jews, Taoists, Confucians, Shinto’s, folk religionists, and those who hold beliefs of an unorthodox sort ... or no religious belief, at all ...

As well all Catholic's, Orthodox, Baptists, Lutherans, Methodists, Presbyterians, Pentecostal's, Charismatics ... and all Anglicans ... and sincere Christians ...

All who have died because of Covid ...

Whether from being foolish or stupid, not having enough or from mis information. From having shonkey views of their faith or their God. Whether from government or state or local incompetence. From political game playing or intentional political interference. Whether from no access to vaccines or poor medical and health services. Whether from greed or meanness, or simply being born in the wrong place at the wrong time.

Or from plainly... getting sick and dying.

The nearly 8 million people who have died so far ... and the millions more no one wants to acknowledge or knows about ... and then, all the many millions ... they have left behind.

I thought it would be good to remember everyone today.

To remember these people ... and to think about Mary's words to us about her brother Lazarus ...

"Lord, if you had been here, my brother, my mother, father, sister, uncle, aunt, cousin, grandad and nana would not have died."

And hope, that one day ... we may live in a world ... where that might be true.

Amen.