

Prayers at any time during the Day

The Rosary

Every time you wash your hands

Pray the Our Father

- Pray for those who do not have easy access to water.
- Pray for those who suffer and die from diseases related to dirty water.

Praying for those most seriously affected:

- Choose a country or group of people affected by the Covid 19 virus and spend time praying for them.
- Pray for elderly people or those with underlying health conditions.
- Pray for those who are in isolation with little or no support.

A simple prayer might be:

O God, I hold before you the people of.../ people who are...

In your mercy, reach out a hand of healing to those who are ill. *(Pause)*

Bring calm to those who are afraid or tempted to give way to panic. *(Pause)*

Give strength and endurance to healthcare workers. *(Pause)*

Give wisdom to those charged with the care of the common good. *(Pause)*

We ask this in the name of your Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, Amen

Pope's Prayer intention for the month

Online Stations of the Cross

Other resources

Several places offer online retreats. Choose one that appeals and use it to guide you through your isolation. Although we are well into Lent now, these resources could still offer ideas and support for your own Retreat

Carmelites: Cherith Brook Retreat⁶ (God invited the prophet Elijah to go to Cherith Brook in order to be nourished and refreshed so as to renew his strength for his journey – a spiritual self-isolation)

Journey into Freedom – a Lent Retreat from the Jesuit's Pathways to God.⁷

Pray as you go – prayer prompts to your phone or tablet.

**Liturgy
Office**

⁶ <https://www.oxcacs.org/online-retreat/>

⁷ <https://www.pathwaystogod.org>

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www.liturgyoffice.org.uk/Resources

Make it a Retreat

Information about how the Church is responding practically to Coronavirus can be found here: www.cbcew.org.uk/coronavirus-guidelines This information is kept up to date and should be checked regularly.



We are at a stage in the managing of the COVID 19 virus where more and more people will be self-isolating. If you have been told to self-isolate, you are probably feeling anxious. As the days go on, you will probably become bored and this will feed your fears even though, hopefully, you will not go on to develop the illness. There are many ways to while away your time of isolation – but one idea might be, as the heading suggests, “Make it a Retreat”.

Making a retreat is something many people find very valuable. It is an opportunity to take time to slow the pace of life – to reflect on God's many graces – and to refresh and renew the spiritual life. Self-isolation could offer you a time to be pro-active and to treat yourself to a retreat. For one of the few times in your life, you are being given permission to take time for yourself and, depending on how strict your isolation, those closest to you. You may be asked to work from home but will be justified in giving yourself space for prayer and reflection. You will not be travelling, for example.

Here are some simple ideas to get you started...

Structure your day

It helps to have a structure to your day. It is very easy to get to the end of a day and wonder what you did with it! This is the reason religious communities have a timetable which would usually include Prayer, Study, Manual Activity and Leisure. Decide on your times but try to include each of the aspects of a monastic day:

Prayer times (ideas below)

Study time — time set aside to exercise your mind. Use books or online resources to

- Learn more about God
- Learn more about the Scriptures
- Find out more about an aspect of Faith
- Explore God's work of Creation.

Manual Activity – a big danger of isolation is something called *acedia* – a kind of inertia that creeps up on you. It is not good physically but is also damaging emotionally and spiritually. You may need someone to bring

you the materials but ideas could include:

- If you have a garden, arrange to spend time in it on your own doing weeding or planting.
- If you live alone – spring-clean!
- Try “contemplative colouring” – or painting or sketching.
- Knit or crochet something for charity. (If you do test positive for the virus, take advice on how to wash it a couple of times before donation)

Leisure Some of the activities may count as leisure, but you could also allow time for online games with family and friends, watching a film or television series or reading a novel.

A possible outline for your day

6am (optional)

Mass with Pope Francis is being broadcast from the Vatican. It is available on YouTube.¹

Morning Prayer

Use **Morning Prayer of the Church**. You do not need to use all of it – pray one or two of the psalms and the Our Father. You can find a free version on *Universalis*.²

Use the **Readings from today's Mass**. You can find them on *Universalis*.

If you would like a commentary, try *Magnificat*³ or *Give us this day*⁴

The Diocese of Hexham and Newcastle has an email for each day based on the Readings. During Lent, you can find them on the diocesan website. If you would like to receive the email, contact spirituality@diocesehn.org.uk

Offer the day to God.

You can use your own words and include any particular concerns you may have for the coming day.

Alternatively, a traditional Morning Offering is

My God, I offer you my prayers,
works, joys and sufferings of this day

1 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5YceQ8YqYMc>

2 <http://universalis.com>

3 http://www.magnificat.com/english/index_uk.asp

4 <https://giveusthisday.org/>

in union with the holy sacrifice of the Mass throughout the world.
I offer them for all the intentions of your Son's Sacred Heart,
for the salvation of souls, reparation for sin,
and the reunion of Christians.

Amen

Breakfast

Study time

Manual activity

Noon – the Angelus

This prayer includes –

- An invitation – to Mary and to us
- A response – from Mary – and from us
- A reminder – that the Word of God became flesh and lived among us.

You can learn more about this Prayer and how it is a central part of the Rededication of England to Mary.⁵

Lunch

Manual activity

Rest time if needed

Evening Prayer

Use the Prayer of the Church – either all or part of it on *Universalis*

Evening meal

Leisure

Night Prayer

Compline is available from *Univeralis*

Alternatively, **pray an Examen** – summed up as:

For what am I grateful to God for today.

Where did I stray from God

— through words, actions or things I did not do.

How might I do better tomorrow?

What grace do I ask from God in order to live more closely in his love.

5 <https://www.behold2020.com>