

## **O God, Come to my Assistance; O Lord make haste to help me!**

### **A starter kit for families praying at home during a time of social distance**

Campus Ministers of United States Schools of the Brothers of the Sacred Heart

Since the beginning of this time of physical distance that has separated us from family, friends, work, schools, and church, all of us are venturing into new territory at our homes. While we may have been trained by our places of work and our schools for how to adapt, we may feel overwhelmed by the prospect of leading our families into prayer experiences and spiritual growth. Our hope is that this document can guide your mindset, give you confidence, and provide all the resources you'll need to inspire the prayer life of your family.

Let us begin with two Scripture passages that speak directly to our current situation.

#### Jeremiah 29:4-7, 10-14

Thus says the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel, to all the exiles whom I exiled from Jerusalem to Babylon: Build houses and live in them; plant gardens and eat their fruits. Take wives and have sons and daughters; find wives for your sons and give your daughters to husbands, so that they may bear sons and daughters. Increase there; do not decrease. Seek the welfare of the city to which I have exiled you; pray for it to the Lord, for upon its welfare your own depends.

For thus says the Lord: Only after seventy years have elapsed for Babylon will I deal with you and fulfill for you my promise to bring you back to this place. For I know well the plans I have in mind for you—oracle of the Lord—plans for your welfare and not for woe, so as to give you a future of hope. When you call me, and come and pray to me, I will listen to you. When you look for me, you will find me. Yes, when you seek me with all your heart, I will let you find me—oracle of the Lord—and I will change your lot; I will gather you together from all the nations and all the places to which I have banished you—oracle of the Lord—and bring you back to the place from which I have exiled you.

#### Luke 11:1-4, 9-13

He was praying in a certain place, and when he had finished, one of his disciples said to him, "Lord, teach us to pray just as John taught his disciples." He said to them, "When you pray, say:

Father, hallowed be your name,  
your kingdom come.  
Give us each day our daily bread  
and forgive us our sins  
for we ourselves forgive everyone in debt to us,  
and do not subject us to the final test.”

“And I tell you, ask and you will receive; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you. For everyone who asks, receives; and the one who seeks, finds; and to the one who knocks, the door will be opened. What father among you would hand his son a snake when he asks for a fish? Or hand him a scorpion when he asks for an egg? If you then, who are wicked, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will the Father in heaven give the holy Spirit to those who ask him?”

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Jeremiah is speaking to Israelites in exile, far from the home they knew. We can all relate to these feelings of being exiled from the world we knew just weeks ago. We also share the fears of the Israelites about the future that is to come. God promises to them and to us a future of hope, plans for our welfare and not our woe. We may struggle to believe in this promise. It's times like these when prayer is most important. God reminds us, “When you call me, and come and pray to me, I will listen to you. When you look for me, you will find me. Yes, when you seek me with all your heart, I will let you find me.”

This sentiment is echoed in the passage from Luke. Note that Jesus' disciples ask him to “teach us to pray.” In Luke's Gospel, Jesus' answer to this question is the essence of the “Our Father” prayer we turn to so often. Jesus continues by assuring us that God is listening. “Everyone who asks, receives; and the one who seeks, finds; and to the one who knocks, the door will be opened.”

In our role as Campus Ministers, we are often called upon in our school communities to lead others in prayer. But that doesn't mean we have all the answers for our faith communities at home, especially when it comes to guiding them through big faith events like Holy Week! We are collaborating here to provide for you the best of what we have found in our own searches and to offer to you our ongoing assistance as we navigate this time of separation. Always know of our prayers and availability.

Fr. Coindre once told a women's group at his parish of St. Bruno, "When we go alone on a long journey we fall into sadness and boredom. We get tired, melancholy, and discouraged. On the other hand, when many travel together, there is joy and expectation. There is mutual support so that the faltering receive a helping hand." Let us journey together!

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## **General Prayer Resources**

- [How to Pray the Rosary](#)
- [How to Pray the Divine Mercy Chaplet](#)
- [Sacred Heart Chaplet](#)
- [Chaplet of the Sacred Blood](#)
- [Pope Francis' Prayer with Mary for COVID-19](#)
- [Archbishop Jose H. Gomez of Los Angeles, president of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, Prayer for COVID-19](#)
- [COVID-19: A Prayer of Solidarity](#)
- [Daily Readings](#)
- [Ignatian Examen - For Life During COVID-19](#) or through [podcast](#)
- [Centering Prayer App](#)

Lectio Divina: a beginner's guide - [here](#)

Matthew 8:23-27

And when he got into the boat, his disciples followed him. And behold, there arose a great storm on the sea, so that the boat was being swamped by the waves; but he was asleep. And they went and woke him, saying, "Save us, Lord; we are perishing." And he said to them, "**Why are you afraid, O you of little faith?**" Then he rose and rebuked the winds and the sea, and there was a great calm. And the men marveled, saying, "What sort of man is this, that even winds and sea obey him?"

Examination of Conscience During the Time of the Coronavirus: click [here](#).

Bishop Robert Barron's Spiritual Lesson While Hunkering Down:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Nb8bcdEQdSQ>

Pandemic Novena:

<https://www.praymorenovenas.com/pandemic-novena>

A great song about how God is always with us! - Matt Redman - *Never Once* - Click [here](#)

Videos, readings, art, and more from the Houma-Thibodaux Diocese:

<https://htdiocese.org/helpmepray>

Educational videos: Augustine Institute **FORMED** (free for 40 days)

Great prayer resource - [Hallow App](#)

Read [Prayer: Our Deepest Longing](#) by Ronald Rolheiser and discuss as a family

Explore [Br. Mickey McGrath's art](#) as a family. Sign up for his newsletters and you will receive daily coloring pages to use as meditation.

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## Online Masses

Daily Mass Link: <https://www.wordonfire.org/daily-mass/>

A list of websites for Mass, prayers, and daily reflections from the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops - [here](#).

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## Holy Week Resources

Readings for Holy Thursday can be found by following this [link](#).

Venerate the cross at home on Good Friday - [This link](#)

Reflection on Holy Week and how we can live the Passion of Christ with Passion from Hard As Nails - [This email](#)

Stream *Jesus* for FREE Easter weekend only. Exclusively available on TBN, watch it on your favorite device by downloading the TBN app, or stream it online: April 10-12 only!" Click [here](#) to watch the movie.

Celebrate Holy Week with Pope Francis & other resources:

<https://www.catholicnh.org/assets/Documents/Community/Health-Care/CelebratingHolyWeekAtHome.pdf>

What is Holy Week? [Busted Halo video: Holy Week in 3 Minutes](#)

Stations of the Cross by students at Mount St. Charles:

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1mCMnZuTIKMt8QB8HAdkAGF8gPXejd564/view>

Voices from the Cross by St. Stanislaus:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HwhFSgK8FsE&feature=youtu.be>

Stations of the Cross by McClancy:

<https://youtu.be/euuEUbO7YMI>

Stations of the Cross by Bishop Guertin:  
<https://vimeo.com/405230481/3f6af58582>

Teen Stations of the Cross  
<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1nQUNQRL2Tjoh0AJFpZdLCiEPiD2zA-65/view?usp=sharing>

Link to the Nationwide praying of the Litany of the Sacred Heart is [here](#):  
This prayer will take place on Good Friday at 11:00 AM on Good Friday.

Way of the Cross led by Pope Francis:  
[http://www.vatican.va/news\\_services/liturgy/2020/documents/ns\\_lit\\_doc\\_20200410\\_via-crucis-meditazioni\\_en.html](http://www.vatican.va/news_services/liturgy/2020/documents/ns_lit_doc_20200410_via-crucis-meditazioni_en.html)

How to celebrate the Easter Triduum at home from The Jesuit Post:  
<https://thejesuitpost.org/2020/04/a-guide-to-celebrating-the-easter-triduum-at-home/>

Holy Week at home resources from John Roberto:  
<https://vibrant-faith-catalyst.mn.co/posts/5668259>

A follow up to Holy Week - Stations of the Resurrection:  
[https://www.smp.org/resourcecenter/resource/13782/?utm\\_source=SM&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_campaign=COVID-19\\_KL\\_E2](https://www.smp.org/resourcecenter/resource/13782/?utm_source=SM&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=COVID-19_KL_E2)

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## Service Ideas

Many of us are looking for ways that we can continue to serve our neighbors while sheltering in place. The Diocese of Raleigh, NC has a great [article](#) with suggestions.

Make homemade masks to donate to hospitals:

Calling all seamstresses and crafty folks! Hospitals are looking for volunteers interested in making homemade masks due to the national shortage of surgical masks. Surgical masks are essential to protect both patients and staff against COVID-19. Here are a few things you should know:

1. Style isn't important, but functionality is. Well-sewn masks without frayed or missed seams or 'holes' is important.
2. The fabric print doesn't matter, but we do care that it's 100% cotton.
3. Finally, elastics should be made to go around the ears, not around the head.
4. Completed masks need to be placed in a plastic bag or closed plastic box.
5. Call your local hospital to see where you should drop off the masks.
6. Example patterns: [Example 1](#) and [Example 2](#). YouTube video tutorial: [here](#).

#### Donate Blood - American Red Cross:

The American Red Cross is looking for people to donate blood. As of Thursday, March 19, nearly 4,500 Red Cross blood drives across the United States have been canceled due to Coronavirus concerns, resulting in more than 150,000 fewer blood donations nationwide. This severely threatens the nation's blood supply, which is essential for lifesaving medical procedures. If you are healthy and can donate blood, please follow [this link](#) or download the Red Cross Blood App for smartphones and tablets to find your nearest donation center and make an appointment.

#### Write Cards:

Our doctors and nurses are working extra shifts, long hours and putting their own health at risk to save others. Take some time to write thank you cards and mail them to the local hospitals. Similarly, grocery store workers are being asked to work extra hours to stock and sanitize the store. They are also at risk due to the number of people they encounter each day. Please send some cards to your local grocery store to thank them for staying open and working hard to offer essential items for us all.

#### Nursing Home Outreach:

Our nursing homes are in full isolation and the residents would love any type of outreach. Some ideas:

1. write cards and mail them to the nursing home.
2. decorate bird houses or make wind chimes that can be placed outside their windows for them to look at.
3. If you play an instrument, call ahead to see if you can play music at people's windows. The elderly love music.

### Check on Neighbors and Friends:

Call your neighbors and friends to check on them during this time of crisis. If you cannot donate dollars, donate your time and positive energy to those who may be home alone.

### Share Inspiration on Social Media:

We are blessed to be connected to each other through social media. Keep your posts/messages positive to help lift the spirits of those around you.

### Pray:

As people of faith, we believe that prayer is a powerful way to put positive energy into the world. Prayer can also serve to calm our own fears and anxieties. Try taking 10 minutes a day to be quiet and rest in God's presence - invite God's healing and peace into the world.