**[Prayer for Life During COVID-19 Lockdown](https://ignatiansolidarity.net/blog/2020/03/14/examen-covid-19/" \o "Permanent Link: Examen for Life During COVID-19)**

*Written by Mary Jackson Kay, Cenacle Sister for use by anyone*

**Welcome t**o this time of prayer, reflection and sharing as we begin **Level 4 Lockdown to combat COVID-19.**

As we come to terms with *physical distancing* may it lead us to deeper intimacy and great unity in our hearts and in the entire world.

# In John’s Gospel 15:4 Jesus has reassuring words while we have to stay at home for the greater good:

**“Live in me. Make your home in me just as I do in you.”**

I’ll lead us now in a time of prayer individually and then a time of sharing together.

As we begin I invite each of us to take a **deep breath**, relax and **share *your name and an image or colour to describe how you are feeling right now….***

* The very phrase **lock-down** can conjure up terrible images….**Turn it around…**
* ***What is it you need to lock down, lock out…both personally and in our local and global communities?***
* ***Place it somewhere*** *locked away for this time…*

**Take a moment to arrive** in your body, your mind and your heart. Listen to your breathing….tense your shoulders into a shrug breathing in, hold it a moment, then relax breathing out; shrug again breathing in, hold it and then relax as you breathe out.

* As you settle imagine you are in a ***safe place that you love,*** it may be outdoors or inside, on your own or with others.

What does this place look like- notice the colours, the sounds and atmosphere.

* **Become aware and welcome the presence of God.**
* **Share with God how you are feeling** and how **COVID-19 is impacting your life….**especially being asked to distance ourselves physically distance from one another.
* **Ask God how you can stay connected with people?**
* **Ask God for the grace and wisdom you need right now...**
* **Open your hands in your lap and imagine Jesus is placing a gift in your hands to help you feel that gift, it may be a symbol, a few words, a colour, a song.**
* **End by give thanks for the gift of this time of prayer.**

**Noticing** your breathing, become aware of where you are and greeting each other with a smile.

* **And let us take some time to share with each other now something from your prayer….**

**End with a blessing of one another……**it seems we breath in the dreaded Corona Virus so now let’s safely share our breathe with one another as a blessing….cup your hands and blow health and peace to one another.

**Amen**

***Being the Body of Christ in this time of Corona Virus***

While the Eucharist is one of the most significant places to encounter Christ, it is not the only one. We also receive nourishment from the Word of God. In this time of lockdown when we aren’t able to gather together for Eucharist, we have the opportunity to encounter Christ in the Word. We can transform the world through the collective energy of our love.

**SUNDAY READINGS FOR 29 MARCH 2020 Fifth Sunday of Lent:**

1 Ezekiel 37:12-14, Psalm 130, Romans 8:8-11, **John 11:1-45**

Lazarus was dead. Yet through an encounter with Jesus comes an experience of hope when all seems impossible.

Now that Aotearoa NZ is in Level 4 Lockdown, we might gradually begin to see things we want to lock up- conflicts, pollution, greedy consumerism, the hectic pace of life….During this time, we can dream of new ways of being and doing.

Listen as Martha speaks her heartfelt sorrow at the death of her brother, Lazarus; but it’s tinged with regret or blame:  "*Lord, if you had been here my brother would not have died*."

What losses related to the COVID 19 Lockdown are you aware of now?

Even when Jesus tells Martha, *"I am the one who raises the dead to life!"* she finds it hard to believe he means now, with her dead brother. Perhaps you doubt that out of this time of restrictions and loss new realities can emerge.

Jesus stands before the tomb weeping, vulnerable.  He places no barriers to his feelings about this loss.  What’s it like for you to be with him there?    
Imagine that you are standing in front of the “tomb” of your life as it is now with all its restrictions, isolation, fears, dreams and hopes.

Tell Jesus your feelings, your vulnerability, your desires.

Gradually, you hear Jesus call your name. This is Jesus who stirs up hope within you, hope during this impossible time. You hear him speak the words to you: “*Be freed!”*

Allow Jesus to gift you in some way- a gaze, a touch, a symbol, a word, a blessing.

As you receive this gift, let hope and love fill you. Open yourself to this new time in your life. Breathe in the gifts you’ve received.

Notice your breathing. Become aware of where you are and give thanks for the gift of this time of prayer***.***

Anne Powell, Cenacle Sisters Jesus Mafa art- Raising of Lazarus

**7 Poems for praying in time of**

**Corona Virus Lockdown**

**By Anne Powell**

***Going deeper***

Go down

down

down

to the place in you

where fire and silence dwell ~

the place of power.

Go down

down

down

to that pool in you

of weedless water ~

the place of knowing.

Go down

down

down

the moss bright path

to your Grandmother’s house ~

the place of song.

Go down

down

down

to the last strawberry ~

freshness of God.

***Visit us***

Visit us

in breath of wind

in endurance of cliffs

in glow of kowhai

in silence of stars

in solitude of moon

in eyes of the poor

in embrace of a mother

in pleasure of friends

in faith that does justice.

***Hints for middle years***

You want to get

to where you’re going

even if you don’t have a map

or a torch

or a long piece of rope

for emergencies

let alone a Band-aid.

The thing is to do the journey.

Enjoy wherever you pass

be it city

or shoreline

or paddock

or people.

And tune your breathing

to the rhythm of soul.

***The learning tree***

I draw on strength from rising moon

I draw on strength from Mary’s womb.

I draw on strength from tumbling wave.

I draw on strength from One who saves.

I draw on strength from kauri tree.

I draw on strength and learn to be.

***Letting go***

When it comes to prayer

trying hard is not the answer

Think more of flying

a kite to freedom

on a clear day

or bathing beneath a waterfall

each sense awake

or letting the heart-gaze rest

on beauty.

Beauty opens to presence.

Hafiz would shout

“enjoy the love-ride, my friend."

***Like a koru***

I am a listener

hearing

the split of silence

at Huka Falls.

I am a singer

making

music on the wind

in the tussocks.

I am a woman

awaiting

the rise of yeast

and the sound of bread growing.

I am a traveller

opening

like a koru

my ear.

***Aotearoa Litany***

Green of fern refresh us

Feathers of kereru warm us

Rocks of Moeraki encircle us

Waters of Taupo bathe us

Dive of gannet focus us

Arc of rainbow protect us

Stars of Southern Cross guide us