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by Stephanie Yeagle

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NCR recently asked how to keep spiritually grounded in a pandemic crisis. Readers responded with how they deepen their faith life and spiritual practice by discovering new prayers and rituals or participating in livestreamed events. You can share your response by filling out this form. Answers have been edited for length and clarity.

For me, praying the rosary as I walk my dog in the early morning has been helping me get through each day. I have been using non-traditional mysteries in my prayer — Jesus in Gethsemane to help me deal with fear; the 10 lepers to help me direct the reality of separation from others toward God; the story of the man born blind to help me remember that these times are meant to show the work of God, not to punish. I'm sure other mysteries will surface in the days ahead. I love the gentle repetition of the rosary. For me, it diffuses anxiety and helps me bring all my "stuff" to God and Mary.

In what ways, if any, has your faith helped you to deal with the crisis?

These times have brought me to a renewed sense of the need to pray, a longing for the Eucharist and a commitment to seeking the small moments of grace and compassion that I too often miss.

JEFFREY SMITH

Rego Park, New York

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I have found the daily meditations online from Ignatian Solidarity Network relevant and comforting, especially since attending Mass is not possible during this pandemic crisis. Since the daily entry also includes the reading for that day, I'm able to follow the liturgy of that day's Mass.

In what ways, if any, has your faith helped you to deal with the crisis?

While these times are frightening, prayer has helped me deal with the social isolation we must follow.

MJ MANLY

Baden, Pennsylvania

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Knowing that we are all in this together strengthens my faith and hope. Connecting with people on messenger, phone and Facebook to be in relationship always helps when one is quarantined at home.

In what ways, if any, has your faith helped you to deal with the crisis?

The hope and belief that God is with us and has not abandoned us.

(Sr.) CHERYL KEMNER, OSF

St. Louis, Missouri



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On our parish website, there's a daily homily from our pastor (Fr. Tom Woost at St. Brendan Parish in North Olmsted, Ohio) and a recorded weekend Mass. Also, we watch daily Mass from neighboring parishes. Liturgy of the Hours is streamed by Fr. John Hollowell from Mayo Clinic where he is recovering from brain cancer surgery.

In what ways, if any, has your faith helped you to deal with the crisis?

Praying helps with anxiety and connects me with our faith community.

HELEN KREITZER

North Olmsted, Ohio

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I'm lucky to live in a place where I can head out my front door and into the wilderness. Lots of snow on the trails, but well packed down. I head out every day, say my rosary, or maybe two. The only creature I met this week was a yearling moose, so no problem with distancing. My huge inspiration is Etty Hillesum. Etty, a young Jewish woman who truly lived the Gospel, lived in Holland and died in Auschwitz on Nov. 30, 1943. Each day, I read this excerpt from her diary:

> … somewhere inside me the jasmine continues to blossom undisturbed, just as profusely and delicately as ever it did. And it spreads its scent round the House in which You dwell, oh God. You can see, I look after you, I bring You not only my tears and forebodings on this stormy, grey Sunday morning, I even bring you scented jasmine. And I shall bring You all the flowers I shall meet on my way, and truly there are many of those. I shall try to make You at home always. Even if I should be locked up in a narrow cell and a cloud should drift past my small barred window, then I shall bring you that cloud, oh God, while there is still the strength in me to do so.

In what ways, if any, has your faith helped you to deal with the crisis?

I realize I'm not alone in this, and as Etty did, I try to do also. How can I look after my God? What can I do today for him? I find gratitude the operative word here. We have so much for which to be grateful. Another great resource is *He Leadeth Me* by Jesuit Fr Walter Ciszek. Ciszek spend 23 years in a Soviet labor camp and suffered terribly, but his trust in divine providence sustained him.

MARGARET HEATWOLE

Anchorage, Alaska

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I've been the sign language interpreter at our parish for over 27 years. Being able to still go to the church building to record the stations of the cross and the weekend

Mass (with four other people) has given me a real sense of purpose and comfort. I'm using the gifts God has given me to try and provide access to the deaf/hard of hearing who do not have access to the majority of resources out there. They cannot listen to music or access the other prayers/experiences that most of the population can use.

Also, our priest has finally joined Facebook so that he can stream the daily Mass. I really hope this continues.

The Examen has been incredibly powerful. I love the app "Reimagining the Examen" and even though I've had it downloaded for a very long time, I'm using it more regularly.

In what ways, if any, has your faith helped you to deal with the crisis?

I've spent so many years trying to give functional equivalence to deaf/hard of hearing people, which takes a lot of work between languages and yet it's led to a deeper faith that I depend upon now more than ever.

Honestly, I'm a mess in many ways. I need to see glimpses of God's presence in little ways because my anxiety and depression are winning this struggle the majority of the time.

JULIE DELKAMILLER

Omaha, Nebraska

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I listen to audio tapes presented by Benedictine Fr. Bernard Uttley, on Novus Ordo Watch, YouTube presentations by Benedictine Fr. Cassian Folsom and Fr. Chad Ripperger on prayer and praying the Novena of Surrender of Fr. Don Dolindo

Ruotolo. I am also studying the Byzantine Greek Catholic rite as I am totally appalled by the state of Roman Catholic liturgy as Latin Mass is not available to me. And of course, I pray the rosary. I have been creating a spiritual notebook of inspirations filled with icons and beauty. And I have been watching the Byzantine liturgies whenever available.

In what ways, if any, has your faith helped you to deal with the crisis?

I had beautiful parents who taught me my faith is a gift to be treasured.

REBECCA PLATZ

Aurora, Ohio

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Besides e-mailing and sharing online with members of my local faith community, I am really encouraged by online resources — Mass from Old St. Patrick's in Chicago (and really checking out different parish Masses), Catholic Theological Union offerings, Georgetown University public offerings as well as the usual from NCR.

In what ways, if any, has your faith helped you to deal with the crisis?

My faith and practice of seeking ongoing adult formation has helped me to use the challenges to "see" what I may otherwise take for granted. Simple things are more appreciated; an opportunity to share more substance with others.

MARY PAUKOVITZ

New Lenox, Illinois

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Franciscan Fr. Richard Rohr's podcast "Another Name For Every Thing" has been really helpful. I need another way of understanding God, a God for this vulnerable time, a God that does not fix everything but is present in this human experience. The podcast opens up so many possibilities.

In what ways, if any, has your faith helped you to deal with the crisis?

My faith keeps me rooted, helps me to see hope and goodness and the suffering all at the same time. The Gospels seem more meaningful because they point me in the direction of a more centered life. I carry my rosary in my pocket. I pray for those who are suffering and for the many who are caring for those who are sick and in need.

GRACE DEL VECCHIO

Easthampton, Massachusetts

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Keeping in touch is a priority: with fellowships, bible study groups and sharing our thoughts. Luckily, I am still able to walk to our tiny country church and enjoy the beautiful peace of the countryside. Our Church of England Bishop Simon Burton-Jones of Tonbridge has a website where I find excellent pithy sermons grounded in everyday life. NCR provides more sustenance from the columns of Fr. Peter Daly, Bishop Thomas Gumbleton and Jesuit Fr. Thomas Reese, but my favorite for beginning the day is Pat Marrin's Pencil Preaching.

In what ways, if any, has your faith helped you to deal with the crisis?

My faith has helped me to adapt to the enormity of what is happening around me, above all to accept and adjust; to still be able to look around and be thankful for what has already been given to me; to take each day separately and thankfully, since I have much to be thankful for.

VIVIENNE DRAY

Gravesend, England

This story appears in the **Tell Us** feature series. View the full series.