

May, 2020

Dear Dioc IMCs,



Little did I realise when I wrote to you at the start of the lockdown that many of us would be self isolating, cocooning. We, in a sense are all Indoor Members at the present time because of the restrictions imposed as a result of this pandemic.

Did you find the material I forwarded before Easter useful? Some dioceses forwarded it to branches and some Branch Leaders adapted my letter and sent the material to their members by e mail or post. During the past few weeks, I have realised that there many MU members living on their own, and finding that they are very lonely. They find Sundays particularly long and miss going to church.

The Archbishop of Canterbury has set up a 24 hour free phone line of hymns, reflections and prayers called Daily HOPE. Tel: 0800 804 8044 If ringing from R of I take off first 0 and use code 0044 and note that this may not be a free call from the Republic of Ireland. Please let members know about this phone line especially those who do not have access to the internet.

There are many MU members involved in projects to help staff and patients in hospitals. Some are making scrubs, others are knitting little hearts which can be given to a patient and their relative. These hearts can also be given to those in residential care as visitors aren't allowed at the moment. Why not give one to a member who is self isolating /cocooning to let them know that we are thinking about them? The pattern I have attached is quite simple and can be completed fairly quickly. You may wish it enclose a scripture verse with the heart such as one of the following:

*Fear not for I am with you; be not dismayed for I am your God. Isaiah 41. V 10*

*The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases. Lamentations 3 v 22*

Do let me know what has been happening in your diocese as we continue in this lockdown so that we can share ideas,

Take care and keep safe,

*Norma*

Beth, our All Ireland Faith & Policy Co-ordinator has asked me to forward this prayer to you.

Faithful Lord, at this uncertain time in our land, we pray for our Indoor Member Contacts that they may be given strength and courage as they help and support our Indoor Members in their dioceses.

Lord, we thank you for these Indoor Members who give so much to this worldwide organisation. These members have supported us in their own homes by prayer and words of wisdom and we ask Lord that you keep them safe at this time and that they may feel the peace of your love.

As we walk into the future with faith may our pace be set by our perfect guide in step with you our loving Lord.

CH5 17 v2 We are pilgrims on a journey, and companions on the road; we are there to help each other walk the mile and bear the load,

God bless you all,

Beth

**Some other prayers which you may find useful:**

God of compassion, be close to those who are ill, afraid or in isolation. In their loneliness be their consolation; in their anxiety be their hope; in their darkness be their light; through him who suffered alone on the cross, but reigns with you in glory, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

We pray for those who are self isolating because they are more at risk. Give them comfort and hope. May they use their time creatively and productively and grant them good rest and patience. In Jesus name we ask it. Amen

Heavenly Father please grant your faith, hope and love to church leaders as they consider the best ways to protect people from being exposed to Coronavirus. Show them any practical measures needed and inspire them by Your Spirit as they minister to their congregations. Amen

Almighty God, we remember those who are working on the front line in our medical services as they work to ensure people who are unwell are well looked after. We ask that you would give them your peace and wisdom at this challenging time. May they know your presence and have a new zeal for caring for their patients. Amen