

Mental Health & Covid-19

What can Catholics do to protect their mental health during the Coronavirus pandemic?

Caritas Plymouth's vision is to live out the Gospel. One of our roles is to share information across the diocese and to provide signposting on support available. This document shares some resources from a range of sources including the Catholic Bishop's Conference of England and Wales and the Catholic Education Service. We hope you find this helpful.

Mental Health and Your Spiritual Life

The Catholic Truth Society has put together a helpful list of suggestions for several ways in which you can nourish your mental health and spiritual life during this time. You can find the full list and more information [here](#), but here are a few key points.

- 1. Make a Spiritual Communion:** spiritual communion is the heartfelt desire to receive Our Lord, even when we are unable because of the distance or for some other reason.
- 2. Watch Mass:** many dioceses are providing information about live-streamed masses in parishes and Bishop Mark's Masses at the Cathedral are all available on [YouTube](#).
- 3. Read the Mass readings of the day:** when you can't attend mass, you can follow the prayers and readings of the mass at home.
- 4. Meditate on the Mass readings:** spend time meditating on the mass readings and discerning what God might be telling you through them, using Lectio Divina, an ancient method of prayer. There is a guide for how to do this on www.IgnatianSpirituality.com
- 5. Join an online community praying together daily:** it is more important than ever to join together in prayer and utilise technology to form communities so that no one is isolated. The Catholic Truth Society will be posting prayers every day on Hozana.

Coping With OCD During Coronavirus

Coronavirus will present a unique challenge to those who live with Obsessive Compulsive Disorder (OCD), especially in the form of scrupulosity (a form of OCD involving religious or moral obsessions). Indeed, the charity OCD Action has reported an increase in support requests from people whose fears have become focused on the Coronavirus pandemic.

For people with OCD and some types of anxiety, being constantly told to wash your hands can be especially difficult to hear. It could also be difficult to identify which behaviours are 'acceptable' and recommended, and which are driven by the OCD and anxiety. OCD Action has published some helpful guidelines about how to manage your OCD during this time. For more information visit: www.mind.org.uk/information-support/types-of-mental-health-problems/obsessive-compulsive-disorder-ocd/about-ocd/

Five Ways to Wellbeing

There are five ways to protect your wellbeing:

- Connect
- Be active
- Keep learning
- Give
- Take notice

Support and Helplines

If you need urgent support you can contact the following organisations on the details given below:

Samaritans

Call 116 123 to talk to Samaritans, or email: jo@samaritans.org for a reply within 24 hours.

SANE

Call: 0845 767 8000 - offers support to anyone coping with mental illness, including concerned relatives or friends. The SANE helpline is available seven days a week from 6pm – 11pm.

Catholic Mental Health Project

An extensive list of mental health support and helplines can be found on the helplines page of the Catholic Mental Health Project website: www.catholicmentalhealthproject.org.uk

OCD Action

Call: 0845 390 6232

Email: support@ocdaction.org.uk

Skype: 0303 040 1112

OCD Action recommends that if you are currently in therapy for OCD, try contacting your therapist or service provider and ask if they offer Skype or phone sessions instead of face-to-face appointments.

Prayer Resources

Alone Together

Inspired by the lives of Benedictine religious, this resource offers support and advice on how to cope with this time of isolation: www.alonetogether.org.uk

Catholic Children's Society

They have resources to use including a series of video resources named 'Meditation with Children and Young People' in collaboration with the World Community for Christian Meditation: www.cathchild.org.uk/meditation-with-children-young-people



The Catholic Bishops' Conference of England and Wales (CBCEW)

Two prayers to bring to God our intentions for those with mental health needs, their families and carers: www.catholicmentalhealthproject.org.uk

CBCEW have posted a resource on the psychological care of clergy and the religious during quarantine. This is also a useful resource for anyone at this time: www.cbcew.org.uk/home/our-work/health-social-care/coronavirus-guidelines/covid19-psychological-care-of-clergy-and-religious

Faith in Isolation

Faith in Isolation is a platform created to spiritually nourish those isolated from their faith practices as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic: www.faithinisolation.com

Pathways to God

They have created an examen for the family during the time of lockdown: www.pathwaystogod.org/my-prayer-life/examen/examen-families-during-lockdown2020

Pray As You Go

This is an Ignatian resource designed to support you each day through prayer reflections that help you become more aware of God's presence in your life, listen to God's word and grow in your relationship with God: www.pray-as-you-go.org

Pray As You Stay

A project run by Pray As You Go that offers reflections and support during this time of Coronavirus and self-isolation.

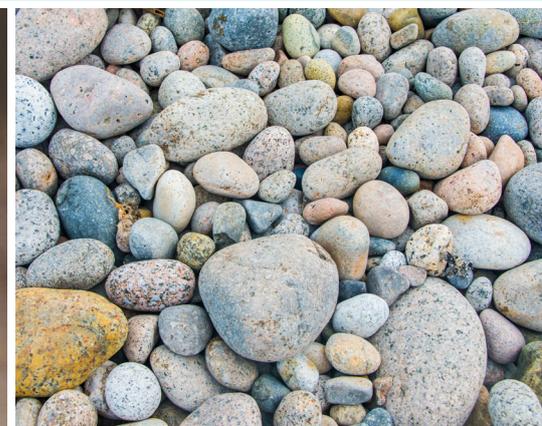
Taizé

Taizé chants are well-known for being a way to meditate and find space to be with God. On their website they have a section where you can select any Taizé song and you can read, sing and play the music: www.taize.fr/en_rubrique2603.html

Mental Health and Wellbeing Resources

The Catholic Mental Health Project have listed Diocesan contacts around the country including Diocesan Mental Health Representatives and Bishops' Healthcare Advisors: www.catholicmentalhealthproject.org.uk/about-us/find-mental-health-pastoral-care They also have an extensive list of charities and organisations nationwide that offer support via their websites and helplines on a wide range of mental health and wellbeing matters such as depression, anxiety, bereavement, eating disorders, self-harm, bereavement and issues in family life: www.catholicmentalhealthproject.org.uk/helplines

- Everybody's Welcome – What is life like if you or someone in your family has mental health problems? What can your parish do to make a difference? www.catholicfamily.org.uk/what-we-do/everybodys-welcome
- St Vincent de Paul Society (SVP) are dedicated to tackling poverty and disadvantage by providing direct practical assistance to anyone in need: www.svp.org.uk
- The Art of Dying Well – An animation that illustrates through the fictional story of the Ferguson family the comforting rites and prayers that help a person spiritually prepare for the final journey. It is narrated by the English actress Vanessa Redgrave: www.artofdyingwell.org



Help Near You

All local authorities have lists of local organisations providing support:

Cornwall	www.cornwall.gov.uk/health-and-social-care/mental-health www.cornwallft.nhs.uk/i-need-help-now Cornwall NHS 24/7 Mental Health Support: 0800 038 5300
Devon	Devon County Council: www.devon.gov.uk/care-and-health/factsheet/mental-health/find-support Devon Partnership NHS Trust: www.dpt.nhs.uk Children and Families: www.childrenandfamilyhealthdevon.nhs.uk/camhs
Torbay	www.torbayandsouthdevon.nhs.uk/services/mental-health
Plymouth	www.livewellsouthwest.co.uk/inpatient-mental-health-neurology/community-mental-health www.rethink.org/help-in-your-area/services/community-support/plymouth-community-mental-health-service
Dorset	www.dorsethealthcare.nhs.uk/access-mental-health www.dorsetmind.uk Children and Families: https://dorsetmindyourhead.co.uk/

Resources

The Catholic Bishops' Conference of England and Wales	www.cbcew.org.uk
Coronavirus: How to Protect Your Mental Health (BBC)	www.bbc.co.uk/news/health-51873799
Catholic Truth Society: Weekly Blog	www.ctsbooks.org/blog
Hozana: Social Prayer Platform	www.hozana.org/en
Ignatian Spirituality	www.IgnatianSpirituality.com
The International OCD Foundation	www.iocdf.org
OCD Action and Coronavirus	www.ocdaction.org.uk/articles/covid-19

