

A Message from Fr. Timothy Lyons, OFM Conv., Shrine Chaplain and Director

Friends,

For all of us to be successful in starving the coronavirus, we need to follow what the medical world and our government are directing us to do. Stay home. Isolate yourself. Wash your hands, cover coughs and sneezes, keep a six-foot distance between yourself and others. If sick, quarantine yourself.

I think that isolation is probably the hardest of all these steps to remaining healthy. We humans are social animals. We live in families and neighborhoods, cities and towns; we teach and learn from others by word and action. All in all, the step of isolation can seem like a punishment.

Isolation can be a lot like quitting cold turkey: What and who do I fill my life when being alone creates a vacuum that demands to be filled? There can be fear in isolation: What do I do now? One easy step is to replace people with things. I can keep myself amused with video games, snack foods, beer, alcohol, drugs: actions that are just kicking the can of isolation farther down the road. OR we can substitute this fear of isolation by being that social animal that we are originally created to be. Replace people with prayer and good works.

Continue to be social by thinking of others. Pray one decade of the rosary for a family member, the next decade for a doctor or nurse in harm's way who is taking steps to heal and comfort others. Pray one decade for your bishop or priest or minister that they will remain healthy and not become anxious about the future. Do not be afraid to begin your prayers with an examination of conscience and ask God for forgiveness for past sins and offenses. Seek forgiveness first, then pray a decade for someone who has hurt you in the past.

Watch Mass on television. Ask God at the time of Communion to receive the grace of His most precious body and blood. If you are unable to watch Mass on television, take time to be alone. Ask for God's divine help. Ask for forgiveness. Read a gospel passage. Pray the prayer of Spiritual Communion, which is below and can also be found on the Spiritual Resources page on our web site:

<https://www.katerishrine.com/programs-1>. Ask for God's blessing today.

Remain social as God has originally intended you to be. Do not be afraid to become social with your Creator and Savior.

-Fr. Tim

Spiritual Communion Prayer

My Jesus, I believe that you are present in the Most Holy Sacrament.

I love you above all things and I desire to receive you in my soul.

Since I cannot at this moment receive you sacramentally,

Come at least spiritually into my heart.

I embrace you as if you were already there

And unite myself wholly to you.

Never permit me to be separated from you.

Amen.