



President's Letter

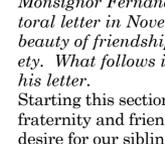
Warm Greetings!
I hope that you and your loved ones are safe and well! The recent months have been tough for everyone as we navigate a new normal amid the Coronavirus pandemic. We have had to suspend our in-person activities to keep everyone at home and ensure everyone's safety, but thanks to technology, we are able to provide personal and spiritual formation activities virtually. Watch out for those activities on our [website](#).

On June 26, we marked once again the Feast of St. Josemaria, one that has traditionally been celebrated with Masses in churches throughout the world. With public Masses restricted in many areas, this year, Msgr. Fernando Ocariz, the Prelate of Opus Dei, celebrated a live-stream Feast Day Mass from the Prelate's virtual Church in Rome. On a personal note, while it pained me to miss attending St. Josemaria's special Feast Day Mass in person for the first time in 45 years, the opportunity to attend the Prelate's virtual Mass in Rome with its beautiful liturgical music was very special.

We are living in a time of unprecedented uncertainty and many questions come to mind. Without God's grace, it can all be a bit overwhelming. At times like these, the worry list can be long, but if we pause to remember that we are always like small children in God's hands and He is a loving Father, it is easier to take stock of what we are living for, of what truly matters, and then continue putting our hand to the plough for His greater glory. We can never lose faith in Divine Providence. On the practical side, for physical and mental health, besides maintaining and even strengthening our life of prayer, we can look for those moments of joy, grabbing that book we've longed to read, going back to our old hobby or learning a new one, or simply reaching out to long lost friends and offering them messages of hope and love.

While we pray for health and peace in these difficult times, for our families and all our loved ones, health-care providers, researchers, essential workers and those who make difficult decisions that gravely influence the public order, let us not forget to entrust to our Lord the poor, the needy, and the most vulnerable.

~ Cynthia Abesa



From the Prelate

Monsignor Fernando Ocariz, the Prelate of Opus Dei, issued a pastoral letter in November, 2019, in which he extolled the value and beauty of friendship, a virtue that is often underrated in today's society. What follows is the final installment of three brief summaries of his letter.

Starting this section with a discussion on the close connection between fraternity and friendship, Monsignor Ocariz reminds us that what we desire for our siblings is their happiness, their faithfulness, and their holiness, and that we should desire the same for our friends. The Prelate notes that while there are many good ways of evangelizing, in the Work, the main apostolate is always that of friendship. A Christian friend desires the greatest happiness—a relationship with Jesus Christ—for those close to her. While friendship in itself is apostolate, Pope Francis explains that “the importance of witness does not mean that our words are not needed. Why should we not speak of Jesus, why should we not tell others that He gives us strength in life, that we enjoy talking with Him, that we benefit from meditating on his words?” Monsignor Ocariz remarks that when our concern for the other person is sincere and fills our prayer, there are no shared moments that are not apostolic, quoting St. Josemaria: “Hence the enormous importance, not just human but divine, of friendship.”

Affirming that we all need friendship, a gift from God that brings us consolation and happiness, the Prelate observes that friendship multiplies our joys and offers comfort in our sorrows. In closing, he reasserts the profound value of friendship, stating that our personal happiness does not depend on the successes we achieve, but rather on the love we receive and the love we give.

Self-Care for Moms



Lauren Ellis gave two workshops on “Self-Care for Moms” just before the COVID-19 lockdown. What follows are two mothers’ different perspectives on the workshops:

Self-Care – Take 1

Back in the days when we could gather in groups bigger than ten, 25 women attended a talk in Orange County entitled “Self-Care for Moms.” Our speaker, Lauren Ellis, started the talk by reminding us that it’s not selfish to take care of ourselves. In fact, we need to take care of ourselves so that we can give the best of us, not just what’s left of us! She said that working well is an important aspect of self-care because when we work better, we are less drained at the end of the day. Working well includes paying attention to ergonomics, staying organized, and trying to maintain focus on the task at hand. And so important as working well is resting well. Lauren reminded us of the importance of sleep, nutrition, exercise, physical and mental health, enjoying beauty, and strengthening relationships. As Lauren pointed out, this talk was not so much about learning something new as it was a chance for us to spend time thinking about which areas we could improve on. We had so much fun! It was wonderful to get together with other women who were also trying to learn to be better wives and mothers.

~ Molly Rose

Self-Care – Take 2

Two weeks before California declared a lockdown, I was in Pasadena with 40 women attending Lauren Ellis’ talk on Self-Care for Moms. After the lockdown started, the question quickly became, “How can I follow Lauren’s great tips in this unique time when self-care seems unrealistic – when families are juggling homeschooling, working from home, clearing spiritual formation, Mass online, and many rainy days?” However, there are two points that I found particularly relevant to these times.

Self-care is not selfish. While discussing beauty, Lauren suggested doing small things to improve your appearance and put your best foot forward. This seems like the simplest (i.e. take a shower and put on some lipstick) and most obvious one for this time of quarantine! She also reminded us that this really sets the tone for beauty in the home. I think after all this time at home, we can attest that the days when we get dressed and groom ourselves are the days when we feel better and can love others in our home better!

What I am about to do is important. While discussing mental health, Lauren stressed the importance of training our minds to focus on each of our daily tasks individually by repeating meaningful mantras. She suggested the following mantras: “What I’m about to do is important.” “This will have eternal value.” “I’m changing the world.” “With this act, I’m serving others.” “This soul will last forever.” These mantras have been instrumental for me as I navigate pregnancy and working from home with toddlers. They give a focus to each moment of these long days, and they help re-center the meaning and purpose of what I am doing.

~ Laura Zambrana



online resources

While we are social distancing due to the Coronavirus, the following are options available to help you and your family strengthen your spiritual life.

St. Josemaria Institute

- **Monthly Days of Recollection**
2 meditations and an examination of conscience, plus a guide on how to make the most spiritually of a day of recollection
- **Weekly Podcasts**
30-minute reflections by a priest of Opus Dei, time for guided prayer; includes tips on praying with the podcasts
- **Spiritual Toolkits**
Articles and podcasts on topics such as the Holy Mass, spiritual reading during quarantine and maintaining a spiritual outlook

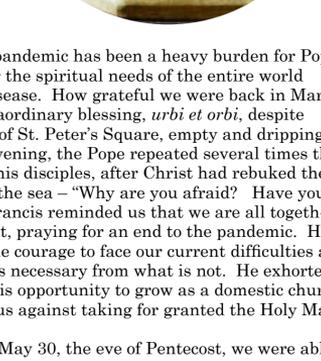
Opus Dei Website

- **Corona Podcast**
A series of podcasts on how to bring spiritual benefits out of the lockdown; “Use it – Don’t lose it.”
- **Daily Lockdown Resources**
Articles, video clips, inspirations for making good use of time
- **Recollection at Home**
Monthly two-hour mini-retreats

Walnut Grove

- **Virtual Faith and Reason** – online classes
- Learn more about the Catholic faith, what the Church teaches

A Call to Action: Join with Pope Francis in praying for those dying of Coronavirus



A Call to Action

The Coronavirus pandemic has been a heavy burden for Pope Francis, caring for the spiritual needs of the entire world facing this new disease. How grateful we were back in March to receive his extraordinary blessing, *urbi et orbi*, despite the sobering view of St. Peter’s Square, empty and dripping with rain. That evening, the Pope repeated several times the words of Jesus to his disciples, after Christ had rebuked the wind and quieted the sea – “Why are you afraid? Have you no faith?” Pope Francis reminded us that we are all together in the same boat, praying for an end to the pandemic. He urged us to find the courage to face our current difficulties and to separate what is necessary from what is not. He exhorted families to take this opportunity to grow as a domestic church, and he cautioned us against taking for granted the Holy Mass and communion.

More recently, on May 30, the eve of Pentecost, we were able to join with the Pope as he united the world in prayer. This time, he was at the Lourdes Grotto in the Vatican Gardens, live-streaming a rosary in unison with Catholic shrines around the globe, praying for those affected by the Coronavirus. **A call to action.** The Pope’s example of constant, trusting prayer in the face of the uncertainty surrounding the Coronavirus leads us to want to do our part in helping the world bear this cross. Before current rigorous quarantining efforts were put in place, many priests ministering to those dying of COVID-19 were themselves stricken with the disease, and in Italy alone, more than one hundred priests died. In light of the many Coronavirus patients who are now dying alone, without access to the sacraments, on March 19, Pope Francis issued an *Apostolic Penitentiary Decree*. The decree grants a plenary indulgence to those who are dying if they say a few specified prayers, noting that through the communion of the saints, the church will entrust them to the divine Mercy, and make up for them spiritually what they cannot do themselves. That is where we come in.

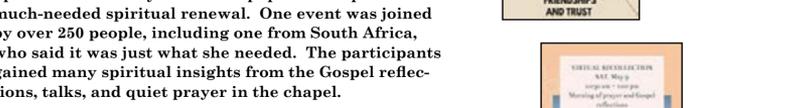
We are the church, and we can entrust those who are dying to God’s mercy. The same decree also grants a plenary indulgence to us if we “**immediately Almighty God for an end to the Coronavirus crisis, relief to those who are afflicted, and eternal salvation to those who have died.**” So, let’s do that. What an amazing act of mercy we and our children can perform, especially while we are all sequestered at home. Every day, we can earn a plenary indulgence and offer it for a Coronavirus victim. We and our children can be heroes for many souls – the best ever use of a quarantine!

For the full text of the decree, including a list of prayers and devotions that can be used to obtain the indulgence, as well as guidelines on necessary conditions, visit <https://press.vatican.va/content/salastampa/en/bollettino/pubblico/2020/03/20/200320c.html>

~ Jane Reckart

YOU ARE NOW LIVE!

Virtual Events for Young Professionals During the Pandemic



Since the COVID quarantine in mid-March, [Beverly Cultural Center](#) has launched virtual events as a way to stay in contact with young professionals, not only in Southern California, but across the country.

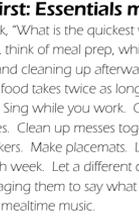
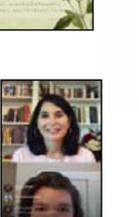
Virtual recollections on various themes such as the Holy Spirit and Our Lady have been popular and provided a much-needed spiritual renewal. One event was joined by over 250 people, including one from South Africa, who said it was just what she needed. The participants gained many spiritual insights from the Gospel reflections, talks, and quiet prayer in the chapel.

As sheltering-in-place continued and people were more isolated, we began a weekly Tuesday Talks: Connect and Inspire via Instagram Live ([beverly_pros](#)), as a way of encouraging young professionals to find ways of growing in their work and relationships, and staying connected with others. Talented speakers have shared helpful ideas, thoughts, and best practices that have been inspiring.

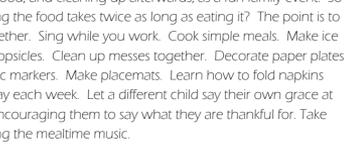
Topics included “Finding Humor in Everyday Life” with Jenny Cadena Rueda, “Beauty in Everyday Life” with Joy Romea, “Pursuing Your Gifts” with Rachel Hall, and “Building Trust and Friendship” with Raven Haynes. Join us for this ongoing event Tuesdays from 5:30 – 6:00 pm!

During this time, we started a YouTube Channel: Beverly Young Professionals, which has been a useful platform for live events and other recordings. Still in its early stages, we hope to continue developing this platform for future initiatives. Through our website, www.beverlyculturalcenter.org, Instagram, and YouTube channel, we hope to continue reaching many people!

~ Lisa Limtiaco



Thriving in a COVID-19 Summer - Tips for Family Time at Home



We are now well into a summer of quarantine, coping with keeping a household of housebound children happy while trying to get everything done. Putting people before the to-dos can be the biggest challenge. With the right **Mama Mindset**, this time with family can be an opportunity for enjoying each other, personal growth, and family unity, while still managing household infrastructure. It can be the best summer ever! Here’s the plan:

Instead of seeing the Coronavirus quarantine as a huge struggle, an obstacle you have to get through to keep your life intact, embrace it. Think of it as an amazing gift of time to spend time with the kids. Before you know it, they’ll be grown and out of the house.

Step 1: Forget about all the things you think you have to get done – that’s the **Mama Mindset** part. It is this writer’s humble opinion that the only household chores that are truly essential are meals and laundry. Everything else can wait.

Step 2: Call a family meeting. Explain to the kids that you want to have fun with them and enjoy every day of this summer, but in order to do that, the whole family will prepare all the meals and do all the laundry together. That’s the only way you will have time to join in on the fun with them. And then jump in.

Step 3: Make a plan for how you will spend family time. At the right are suggestions for ways to spend time together and find personal enrichment at the same time.

Above all, enjoy your family. Enjoy being together, doing things together, learning together. Enjoy the summer, and know that this will be a valuable investment in relationships that will last a lifetime, well beyond the quarantine.

~ Jane Reckart

First things first: Essentials mastered - together:

Meats – Don’t think, “What is the quickest way I can get this meal on the table?” Instead, think of meal prep, which includes setting the table, cooking the food, and cleaning up afterwards, as a fun family event. So what if making the food takes twice as long as eating it? The point is to have fun together. Sing while you work. Cook simple meals. Make ice cream and popsicles. Clean up messes together. Decorate paper plates with non-toxic markers. Make placemats. Learn how to fold napkins a different way each week. Let a different child say their own grace at each meal, encouraging them to say what they are thankful for. Take turns choosing the mealtime music.

Laundry – Tell stories of your childhood while sorting, laundering, folding, and putting away. Take the time to teach them to do laundry chores well. By the end of the summer, not only will your kids be proficient with laundry, but they’ll know how to prepare some simple meals as well.

Now for the fun. Think of this summer as your chance to do all the things you’ve ever wanted to, but never had the time to do. The goal is for you to have fun, too. Throw yourself into what the kids are doing. Do it all with them, and enjoy being with them.

Outdoors – Take a walk every day and say the rosary. It will be helpful to get out of the house daily and run off some steam.

Art – Make a sidewalk chalk gallery. Learn how to travel watercolor. Collect nature items and make collages. Learn origami.

Music – Sing songs. Learn how to harmonize. Buy recorders (the kind you blow into), learn how to play, and have a recorder band. Practice an instrument and have after-dinner concerts.

Dance – Have a weekly dance night. Roll up the rugs and dance the twist together. Take turns choosing the music. Learn how to dance hip-hop, a waltz, the Charleston.

Science – Do experiments. Make egg drops. Build toothpick towers.

Literature – Read books to each other, including Bible stories and the lives of the saints. Make your own picture books, gluing photos of the kids’ faces onto magazine photos. Write stories together, with each person dictating one line or paragraph. Write letters to grandparents. Write and draw daily in a journal.

Language – Learn a language. Take a virtual trip to that country. Draw the country’s landmarks for travel posters. Play its music. Try some of its recipes. Make labels in that language for the items in your house.

Drama – Have puppet shows. Make movies. Act out fairy tales.

Sports – Play dodgeball. Have three-legged races and sack races. Make an obstacle course. Learn how to do a two-man somersault.

Exercise – Do yoga, calisthenics, aerobics. Keep a chart of how many sit-ups and push-ups everyone can do. Give prizes when they meet a goal.

Games – Play cards. Play board games. Have tournaments. Learn how to play chess.

Old-fashioned toys – Legos, yo-yos, jump rope, marbles.

Construction toys – Blocks, blocks, Lincoln Logs, Tinker Toys.

Paper construction – Make paper airplanes, paper boats, paper hats, paper dolls, origami.

Build a fort – Even if it’s just a sheet hanging over the dining table. Let the kids sleep there. Reconceive all those Amazon shipping boxes.

Garden – Grow veggies and flowers. Water and weed together.

Watch the sky – During the day, watch the clouds. See what animals you can find. During the night, watch the stars. Look for shooting stars and satellites. Mark August 13 on your calendar, to watch the annual Perseid meteor shower.