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Dear Parishioners of Our Lady's, St Anne's and St. Jerome's

As we enter the new lockdown, it is time to pause for thought. Some of us have remained at home since the early days of the pandemic, some have done so in the last few weeks. Others have kept busy until the last moment. Whatever situation we find ourselves in, the prospect of four weeks of lockdown presents its challenges. How can we approach these days?

It might sound strange to talk about silence or quiet. To some, it is an uncomfortable place to be. Others thrive on it. But silence and quiet can be a friend to us all. The last eight months since the pandemic began have been extraordinary and exceptional for us all. Normal, as we know it, has disappeared. We have all known frustration and anxiety. We could happily list each one of the changes that have happened in our lives, on the outside of things. But could we do the same for what is happening within us?

I have often wondered why it is that we have reached for the furthest parts of space and explored the deepest parts of the ocean, but still know so little of what lies within each one of us. I don't mean the sciences of the mind. These have made amazing progress in recent years. I mean the journey that lies within, the beautiful other part of us; the spirit, the soul. Many of us lead active and busy lives. These coming weeks will be difficult. Is God inviting us to pause for a little while to listen to Him?

If we are able to put a little time aside each day to sit still, to read a little passage of Scripture or a spiritual book and to rest for a while in the presence of God, we might be surprised how quickly peace comes to us. The anxieties of all that is happening around us will lessen. The whisper of God within us is reassuring us that all will be well. This crisis might seem to be passing slowly but pass it will!

In these moments of prayer and reflection, let us remember each other. We will be together again. Until then, let us place our hands in the Hand of God and allow ourselves to be led.

God bless you all.

Father John



Our Lady of Compassion

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