

Cistercian Community of Arévalo, Spain

Arévalo, July 18, 2020

How have we been living the situation of a “lethal virus” that has invaded the world?

For our part, it has reminded us of situations in the Bible, for example, the plagues of Egypt. It has been really an apocalyptic situation.

We have been expressing our solidarity with those dying from the virus with our prayer and our suffering for them. We have sent some letters of encouragement and condolences to certain hospitals, that they could read to the sick so that they don't feel so abandoned.

We have also stayed close to the problematic of the hospital personnel, and the voluntaries; we feel as if we were all one family, helping each other with prayer, food supplies and other things.

When the elderly die, and even without family at hand, we feel the tragedy of it even more. It's like losing the wisdom and values of our beloved old folks.

Following the impulse of the Holy Spirit we have gone several times, at eight o'clock in the evening, to the T.V. set, to accompany and back up with our applause all the health and faculty personnel, so that they don't feel they have been left all alone in their incomparable labors of attention to the sick.

We have been living our daily Eucharist putting all on the altar of our celebration; so too the Divine Office, since the psalms stand out more actual than ever as we implore the grace of God for all.

Our life has been a discovery: we are living united with all; our heart is telling us that God in Person is fulfilling our every need and desire. We feel that we are little lamps, giving light and warmth.

The solidarity shown us by others has been a great grace and service; we are never lacking in personal protection for those who are in the monastery, nor for the persons that are helping us.

We are living our monastic day intensely with faith and hope as we turn again to God and our charism.

Regarding our economic situation, we have not suffered any repercussions, since we receive help of all kinds.

Here in the local Church, our bishop, Don José María, was caught by the corona virus, and was in care for about two months; by the grace of God he has recovered his health well. We lived with our Holy Father Francisco his Holy Hour and his Blessing so full of love and concern for all that we are now living. We also accompanied our Bishops of Spain and representatives of other religions in a Mass offered for all those who have died. It was moving and profound; our King Felipe VI, with his family, was also present at the ceremony.

We would be happy to know how all our communities are getting along. Here, we are well, and we pray for all of them, that the Lord give them strength in their difficulties.

Warmest greetings to our Abbot General and his council. United in prayer,

M. Esther and community.