

Covid-19 Pandemic: Our Experience at Santa María de Miraflores – August 2020

In the spirit of the Charter of Charity, and encouraged by the joy that we do not face challenges alone, we share with you our experience of living the *ora et labora*, under the impact of the current pandemic:

1. **EVERYDAY LIFE:** the pandemic has slowed down all of human life and brought greater stillness. This has made our community more aware of what is essential and what is not. We thank God that the pandemic itself has mostly not affected us. But we try to take special care of ourselves and we recognize that, if in OCSO we had been talking about the precariousness of the communities, in Miraflores we now think we must also speak about the precariousness of humanity. We were blessed to do something most people can no longer do--to say our farewells to Fr. Jorge on his own Easter journey (non-Covid19).
2. **LITURGY:** the Monastic Office has incorporated prayers for those affected by the pandemic. And, under the Bishop's guidance, we have celebrated the Easter festivities with greater simplicity. In addition, at Sunday and daily Mass (without guests), we receive communion by intinction and greet each other with a simple bow.
3. **WORK:** after some initial concerns, we have adapted to the new situation. Activities at home and those that involve sharing with the laity continue as usual, except for sanitary measures. As for purchases, instead of going out, supplies are mostly brought to us. We increase our pantry reserve somewhat and try to make better use of what we have. Where possible, lay people combine tele-working with face-to-face work. A team of health professionals has been of considerable help to us, especially with our older brothers and our lay workers.
4. **ECONOMY:** the health crisis initially had some benefits, before it restricted our products' sales and lately our income. But no worker has been fired.
5. **HOSPITALITY:** we have had to close our Guesthouse and regret what this means for those who used to benefit from this service, as well as for our own relatives. The only exception we have made is to welcome our Quilvo sisters' Novitiate for formation purposes. We have decided to enable the Guesthouse to house any brothers who might become infected. We do recognize that the absence of guests and visitors has led to a more secluded environment conducive to monastic life.
6. **RELATIONSHIP WITH THE LOCAL CHURCH:** it has been restricted, as neither the new Apostolic Administrator nor the pastoral agents who had been visiting periodically have been able to come. But we remain united in prayer and charity.
7. **CURRENT NEEDS:** due to the pandemic, we have not held our scheduled abbatial election.
8. **FUTURE OUTLOOK:** we plan to explore new ways of marketing our products, such as online sales. In addition, we are contemplating helping people access Sunday Mass by the same route, or already in person. Conscious of our dependence on God, we hope to live and overcome everything in HIM.