

## Daughters of the Heart of Mary

“As the Father sent me,  
so am I sending you”.  
Jn 20:21

## Info Flash Coronavirus | April 2020

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The time of persecution that marked the beginning of *Society* has oriented it to the spirit of the early Church<sup>11</sup>, to its fidelity to Christ, its ecclesial spirituality and its charity.

C3

The General Council received your news and decided to share them because we realise how much your hearts are expecting news of your sisters. It is impossible to say everything and probably we have unintentionally forgotten some important things. Do not hesitate to communicate them to us so that we can share them in another news flash. Let us increase communion and sharing, which are beyond the reach of the virus!!

1. **The Corona crisis and our Founders:** Many of you refer to the experiences of "lockdown" and various deprivations of our founders. During our times of adoration of the Blessed Sacrament in particular, we remember them and our first sisters who had to live in hiding or in prison for months and years, often without the support of the sacraments. But we know that they drew their strength from these times of worship and from there did a lot of good around them, both material and spiritual.
2. **Health update:** Thanks to God, the Society as a whole is well protected so far. Only one of our Belgian sisters, Anne Van Russelt died on March 22. Others of our sisters were infected; one in Bergamo, another in France but they surmounted the disease. Relatives of our sisters died and many other acquaintances.
3. **Lockdown** is fairly widespread in our provinces today, even if some are already partly freed from it (Germany) or approaching it (other European countries) with some fear of a second wave. Even though we all live the same ordeal, the difficulties and the possibilities are not the same everywhere, for example as regards the hygiene precautions. Not so easy in some countries or places of mission, but everywhere means to wash hands are implemented. Not so easy to find masks ... but many of us work to sew masks or gowns for caregivers and also to explain and raise awareness as much as possible to protect the most vulnerable. Especially in countries where governments have ridiculed these measures and the lockdown.

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4. **DHMs in homes for the elderly** are often confined to their rooms and cannot be visited, which is often very difficult after several weeks. **The DHM who live alone** also find the time long even if it is also possible to take advantage of it.
5. **Let's applaud our DHM caregivers!** Among DHM, doctors and nurses are either on the front line or overworked to help the front line dealing with Covid patients, in India, Haiti, Burkina, Rwanda, Madagascar, Portugal, Mexico, Benin ...
6. **Work:** many of our sisters discover teleworking, teachers organize their lessons and students follow them via the internet when possible, some still go to their place of work, others are temporarily unemployed.
7. Many of us participate in **solidarity actions:** distribution of food to migrant workers in collaboration with government personnel in India, or to the sick or poor who no longer have the opportunity to earn their daily bread in many countries, especially in Africa, Madagascar and Haiti, participation in various forms of volunteering, shopping for others, sewing gowns, masks, providing psychological support to traumatized people, telephone call to isolated people.
8. **Spiritual life:** most of the DHM today take part in Mass by the Internet, television or radio and have organized "extraordinary" times of worship for this crisis. There are also common rosaries and divine mercy rosaries. In this very special Lent and Holy Week, due to the lockdown, all report having lived these moments more deeply. Some have made a retreat online and a DHM has directed one. There was also a recollection with the Zoom application. We explore a lot on the internet planet!! Several are getting techno-savvy now...

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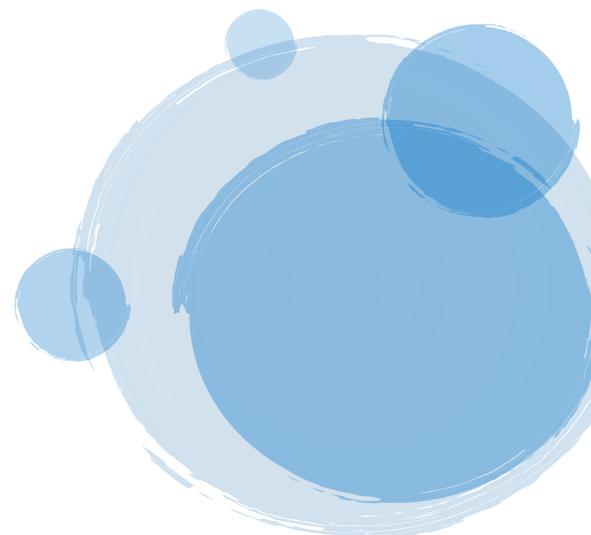
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Inspired by the life of Mary and the first  
Christians, the Daughters of Heart of Mary will  
form '*One heart and One soul*'.<sup>12</sup>

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9. **Community life:** everywhere we try to maintain the link with those who are far away thanks to these new means of communication. Many say how ties are strengthened in this time of trial and our spiritual life has grown deeper. Sharing talents enables new learning: learning a new language, practicing calligraphy, progressing with computers, training to think positive, to strengthen our immune system, not forgetting to relax together, to do physical exercise, or even picnicking in the garden!
10. **The domestic chores\_at home** or the care of the elderly can no longer be assumed in certain communities by outside workers, so greater participation in community tasks. DHM live simpler lives and in gratitude for what is given with no complaint for shortages.
11. **Nature** has come closer to us, birds, butterflies, bees (that we hardly saw anymore), and even foxes, or other animals sometimes enter cities and gardens! Fear is gone as wonder fills us. And the reduction in noise pollution allows us to taste all of this... to be present to nature, to God, to others and to ourselves.



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and to serve.<sup>13</sup>

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12. **An inspiring Word from one of us** *"For all of us, this confinement is a deep inner experience, which brings about struggles, awareness, different ways of looking at life and the future. Our overloaded agendas become empty, we who used to plan everything well in advance, we live in the present moment without being able to make plans, it is both insecure and liberating. We are also experimenting other ways of consuming. In the buildings, relationships are created between residents who were previously unaware of each other, great solidarity actions are taking place and some show magnificent creativity! Everything is different. We are no longer the masters and that changes everything! » (Elisabeth Z.)...*

### 13. **Pope's Prayer for month of May:**

"In the present tragic situation, when the whole world is prey to suffering and anxiety, we fly to you, Mother of God and our Mother, and seek refuge under your protection.

Virgin Mary, turn your merciful eyes towards us amid this coronavirus pandemic. Comfort those who are distraught and mourn **their loved ones who have died**, and at times are buried in a way that grieves them deeply. Be close to those who are concerned for their loved ones who are sick and who, in order to prevent the spread of the disease, cannot be close to them.

Fill with hope those who are troubled by the uncertainty of the future and the consequences for the economy and employment.

Mother of God and our Mother, pray for us to God, the Father of mercies, that this great suffering may end and that hope and peace may dawn anew. Plead with your divine Son, as you did at Cana, so that **the families of the sick and the victims** be comforted, and their hearts be opened to confidence and trust.

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Protect those **doctors, nurses, health workers and volunteers** who are on the frontline of this emergency, and are risking their lives to save others. Support their heroic effort and grant them strength, generosity and continued health.

Be close to those who assist the sick night and day, and to priests who, in their pastoral concern and fidelity to the Gospel, are trying to help and support everyone.

Blessed Virgin, illumine the minds of **men and women engaged in scientific research**, that they may find effective solutions to overcome this virus.

Support **national leaders**, that with wisdom, solicitude and generosity they may come to the aid of those lacking the basic necessities of life and may devise social and economic solutions inspired by farsightedness and solidarity.

Mary Most Holy, **stir our consciences**, so that the enormous funds invested in developing and stockpiling arms will instead be spent on promoting effective research on how to prevent similar tragedies from occurring in the future.

Beloved Mother, help us realize that we are all members of one great family and to recognize the bond that unites us, so that, in a spirit of fraternity and solidarity, we can help to alleviate countless situations of poverty and need. Make us strong in faith, persevering in service, constant in prayer.

Mary, Consolation of the afflicted, embrace all your children in distress and pray that God will stretch out his all-powerful hand and free us from this terrible pandemic, so that life can serenely resume its normal course.

To you, who shine on our journey as a sign of salvation and hope, do we entrust ourselves, O Clement, O Loving, O Sweet Virgin Mary. Amen.”