

LOCKDOWN CHURCH

I have been combining exercise and prayer most days through Lockdown since exercising was allowable and prayer cannot be prohibited.

While walking alone or cycling I have been doing two decades of the Rosary using my fingers to count the Hail Marys. On longer bike rides I did a whole Rosary.

The buildings of the Lockdown church stand in sunny meadows with a choir of skylarks.

I pass by the chapel of the blackthorn bushes covered in white flowers, and reach the shrine of flowing waters. A procession of swooping swallows flits low above the water, while a heron stands silent as a deacon.

The vestments of flowers are of blues, purples, pinks and cream and white. No Solomon in all his finery was not dressed as these.

I praise God in the blue sky of heaven above my head. I look to the return of the Son of Man upon the clouds.

Then I enter the Cathedral of the woodland between great tree trunk pillars that reach high up to roofs of leafy green; to arches made of branches – the sunlight twinkles in between.

As I return I feel the Spirit in the breeze upon my face.

After the Rosary I make my request and ask Mary to intercede for those less fortunate than myself, not able to worship on lone walks and in solitary bike rides in the monastery of nature. I pray for those who cannot retreat from negative influences and do not have the freedom I enjoy.

Dusk is falling and every bird joins the choir to sing its song before putting its head under its wing upon a branch. Bats suddenly swoop criss-crossing in the air for Nunc Dimittis and feast on midges.

The first woe is nearly past; we will return and re-open the doors of churches. Then will we rejoice in congregations with our priests, and celebrate again together.

Clare Merry

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