

CONECTA 90

June 2020



WE SHOULD NOT GO BACK TO NORMAL,



BECAUSE NORMAL WAS THE PROBLEM.



Conecta is the internal newsletter of the Blessed Virgin Mary Institute, IBVM, Spanish Province.

A religious community inspired by Mary Ward, who wants to live its spirituality and share it with the people with whom it lives and works.

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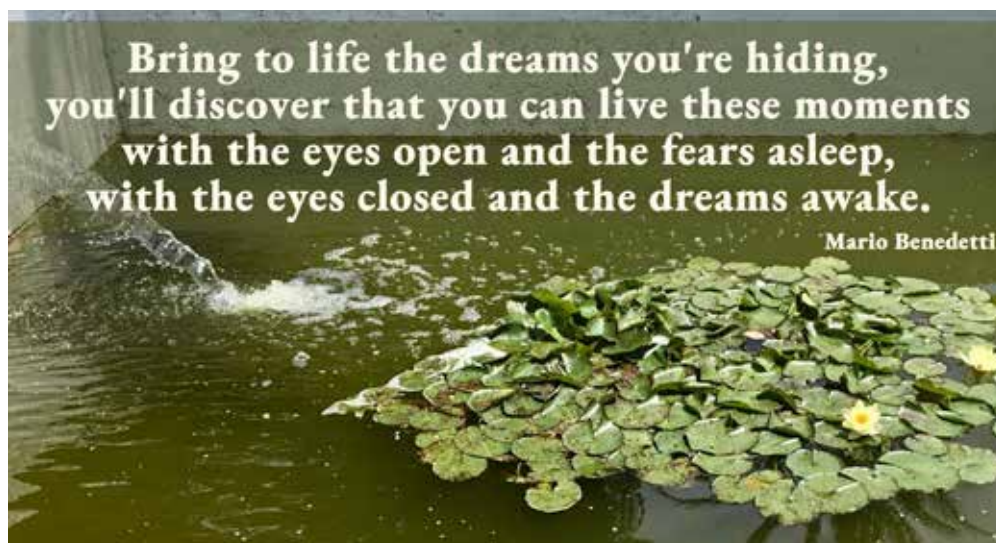
Front Page Picture:

A poster that has circulated a lot on the social networks is this one that suggests that we should take advantage of this time of interiorization to change our way of life and consumption, which is causing the earth to become sick.

Social distance isolates us. Let's approach from the heart



By
ISABEL GORTÁZAR, IBVM



There is no doubt that this experience of living a pandemic confinement does not happen every day. You have to go back a century to remember the pandemic of the misnamed "Spanish flu."

These has been a time in which, either you shrink, or on the contrary you come out reinforced.

A call to look inside. A call to contemplation, nature, a call to cultivate the senses. Looking inside in order to come outside reinforced. The situation, the moment, both personal as well as global, invites us to be connected through personal, community and world prayer.

I have remembered Mary Ward confined to her grandmother's house, confined because of her faith. She came out strengthened and with a mission to fulfill.

Those images, those morgues and those names, some of them you know, and they

are under the clutches of the covid19.

The virtuality of the moment. We have been better assisted than ever. Networks, groups, theologians, and simple people have shared their experiences, their reflections, their day to day.

Mobile has brought us closer, and digital platforms have brought us together and we have seen, heard and felt.

I have lived it with a sense of globality and "feeling with the Church", as Ignatius de Loyola says in the Rules "Thinking with the Church" that he wrote while in Rome, between 1539 and 1541. Interesting to see that the original Spanish says "feeling", rather than "thinking"...

This became a reality when, on June 11, we had the closure of the activity of the Mary Ward Circles this year. We had a videoconference, and each group shared through a video, ppt, song, a

text, their dreams for the future, their experience... This has also happened on Sundays when we met virtually at province level.

I want to rescue the image of Pope Francis, alone, in the Vatican Square.

"We are all in the same boat," the Pope told the world on March 27. A call to communion, to feel united and connected.

It is happening that many people are suffering from confinement myopia. We have not focused at long distance ... we have lost vision.

The mask takes away our expression, invites us to smile with our eyes. Social distance isolates us. Let's come closer from our hearts.

Now it's the time to focus at a long distance, to project and to dream that another world, with opportunities for all, is possible, thanks to equity, universal justice and human rights.



We got lost in the forest, but the forest is our home

We were walking in the forest of life, but not letting the forest, the life, make us live.

The forest is something fantastic, but going into it can make us experience fear, uncertainty, loneliness, it is full of questions and mystery... anyway, the forest is not a place or an experience, the forest is life, it is a set of complex relationships between living and non-living elements.

This time of COVID-19 made us - and hopefully will always make us - feel ONE IN THE SAME EMBRACE, just like a forest, like trees holding hands. This "cursed" time of which we can say a thousand

words of sadness, of anguish, of despair, is a "blessed" time, it is an extraordinary invitation that life itself makes us: "Hello sister/brother, do you want to sit down and have a little chat? "Can we live better?" "Listen, but how many beautiful people in this world, look at the people, the earth... Hey, we're one family!"

This time gave us the gift of feeling like a family where each one plays his or her own important role, just as in a forest everything contributes to keeping the delicate balance of the entire ecosystem intact.

Hidden in each forest is a treasure that awaits us, a magic chest full of gifts placed there for each person, each thing... this is our life and this is simply wonderful. I wish that we pay attention not to get lost again in this forest of life that simply calls us to live as a human family:

- let us enter the forest of life with respect and love
- let us be conquered and amazed
- you don't have to run fast, you don't have to hurry, you have to look and feel.

ANNA QUINTERIO, CJ



God has a time for everything



Mary Ward said, “God has a time for everything.” The time of confinement on account of Covid-19 has been a learning of something so relative, subtle, ephemeral, sublime, mystical, poetic... and I could go on putting a thousand and one adjectives to define it. A time that being 24 hours, which multiplied by 60 minutes by 70 days, would give some macroscopic but microscopic numbers in light of the time already lived.

And now, after this time, what do I expect for the future?

I hope to value time and give priority to all the things that I always leave for another time. To dedicate more

time to meeting the people I love and with Whom I love and who loves me, to dedicate more time to taking care

**If God has a time
for everything,
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of myself and others, to enjoy the small details, so often

taken for granted, that are a gift, they are rest for the soul...Yes, all this reminds me of the good resolutions we make when we take balance of the time we have lived, when we are going to start a new year.

There are many people who have fallen by the wayside, that makes me think that perhaps I would have to show and demonstrate that certainly in my life there are many people I love, because time escapes from our hands like air and, if God has a time for everything, it would be precious to have an understanding of that time that He gives us every day.

BLANCA BERGARECHE, IBVM

It is time for the beautiful practice of the Ignatian charism



I have not ceased to think about what the Pope told us «suddenly we realized that we were all in the same boat... fragile...» and its reflection in Mary Ward's life

In these circumstances I have not ceased to think about what the Pope told us in his Blessing to the world “suddenly we realized that we were all in the same boat... fragile...” and its reflection in the life of Mary Ward, in her first departure from England. That hesitant yet confident foot... fragile. Mary Ward has been my guidance these days.

We are in that boat that inspires me to leave all control, to let myself be carried away by the day to day and to see in every daily thing an opportunity for flexibility, trust, acceptance and gratitude. I believe that this time is a beautiful practice of the Ignatian charism.

One of the reflections that I have liked most of all is that of the [Chilean writer and psychologist Pilar Sordo](#). She

defines anxiety and fear as an illness that she calls “an excess of future”. This illness can affect us now, thinking so much about “what is going to happen now?” prevents us from connecting with the present, becoming aware of where we are and what we are doing, focusing on trust and gratitude instead of fear. Pilar Sordo makes a beautiful metaphor about love and fear that can make us think: “When we enter the room of love, we find the brothers of love: solidarity, justice, equality, empathy, generosity, joy... When we enter the room of fear, we find the brothers of fear: selfishness, anger, envy, resentment, little empathy... it's up to each person to choose which room to enter to face the future.

LILIANA CASTRO, CJ

Let's not lose the value of silence



Hope, adaptation, resilience, docility, patience... are words, attitudes that have accompanied me these days. Some more than others, but in general it is what I have perceived around me and what I have tried to transmit in order to, as my sister reminded me, support ourselves and each other. I can't pretend that nothing happened, especially since it didn't finish happening. I think of those who "live from day to day", or suffer from addictions or have lost their jobs or are paid –or not- some government subsidy or immigrants who continue to arrive on our beaches, now also sick with COVID19, while here we think of summertime... This is not over.

I'm writing at the beginning of what they have decided to call "new normality".

I don't like the expression. If it's "new" it's not "normal" and if I want something new it has to be abnormal, different. I think it's time to dream, to wish and yearn for change, to not give up and to discover what each of us can contribute. Our Focus group* (that's our name because we have our origin in that Focus of Spirituality, we are the so called Circles of Mary Ward) has shared a lot these months. Besides a couple of virtual meetings, we have had with the other groups of Mary Ward from Seville an end of course meeting, also virtual. It was precisely "What do we dream for the future" and in preparing it we had the opportunity, indeed, to dream. Our dreams are:

■ to live "from within" (prophetic motto of the IBVM schools for this past academic

year), not to lose the value of silence, to look with the eyes of God, so that people and situations that are important to Him do not pass unnoticed, to live more slowly, with time for all this, to pray more and to act better. And all for the greater glory of God.

■ After this confinement, after so much looking inwards, with the breath of Pentecost, may we go out to a concrete action, to some mission...

■ Travel to Mary Ward's places, where she was born and lived.

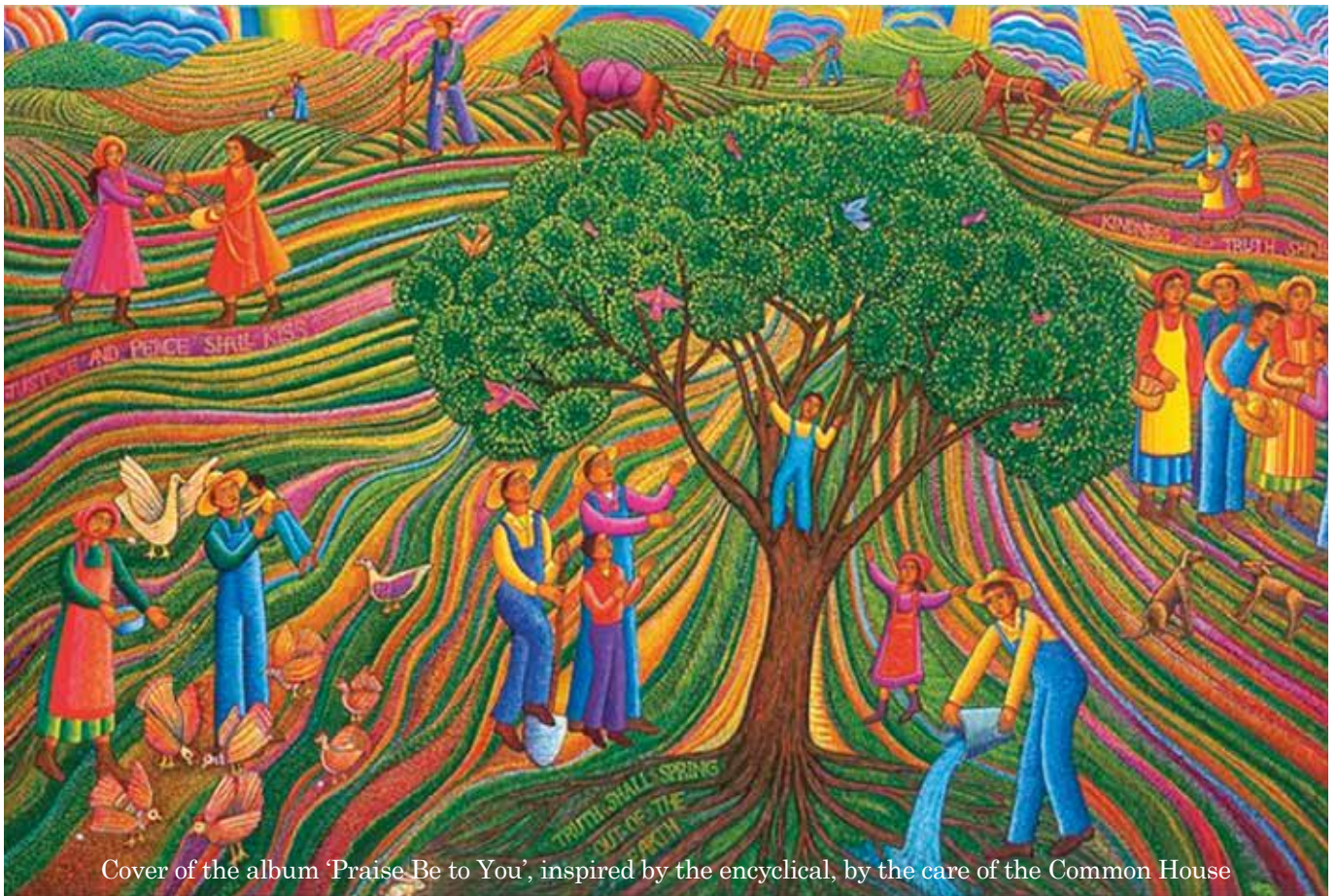
■ And we dream of Mary Ward's beatification.

ANA SERRANO

* Silvia, Conce, Juan, Bambina, Diego, Isabel and Ana, members of the May Ward Circle to which I belong.

Reflection for the Common House

On the occasion of the fifth anniversary of the publication of the *Laudato Si'*, Catholics from all over the world joined together for a week of reflection, prayer and action for a better world, in which, as the encyclical on ecology says, “everything is connected”.



Cover of the album 'Praise Be to You', inspired by the encyclical, by the care of the Common House

In 2015, the Pope wrote *Laudato Si'*, helping the world's 1.2 billion Catholics to better understand that “everything is connected” and placing millennia of Catholic doctrine in the context of the current ecological crisis.

At the extraordinary moment of the fifth anniversary, the global mobilization that was planned to celebrate *Laudato Si'* week took place virtually, although it did not lose strength and participants.

Workshops and meetings were held online from all corners of the world, news,

videos, Whatsapp messages were produced, inviting to and sharing reflections. Thousands of people from all over the world connected on May 24th to pray together online, each in their respective language, creating a wave of prayer for the Creation and for the most vulnerable in the world.

Many more initiatives filled a vibrant and energetic week, including the sharing of art, paintings, poetry, songs... Also, as part of the celebration, some really bold initiatives emerged, such as

that of 42 religious institutions from 14 countries that [announced their disinvestment in fossil fuels](#).

In addition, 21 Catholic organizations with \$40 billion in assets under their management pledged to invest in companies that are aligned with their values.

A wave of hope united Catholics around the world during *Laudato Si'* Week, increasing the commitment to justice and solidarity, to the responsibility to act in defense of the earth and the life that inhabits it.

Islam-Christian dialogue

This photograph by Clotilde de Maroussem, Ibvm, of a sunrise in a peaceful town in Morocco invites us to “welcome and reflect on that light that comes from above”.

The IBVM companions in the mission of IBVM in Asilah, Morocco, invite us to reflect on the Islam-Christian dialogue on any occasion. They always share their feeling of human brotherhood beyond religions.



IBVM's Art Ministry celebrates its first year



From right to left: Sarah Rudolph (Canada), Clotilde de Maroussem (Morocco/Mauritius), Jen Bromham (England), Santrina Tumusiime (East Africa), Wamuyu Wachira (East Africa), Mary Mallany (Canada/facilitator) Susan Daily (Australia), Eveleen Hallahan (Ireland), Bernadette Turtle (England), Mary Teresa Kane (Canada), Brigid Tunney (Ireland), Jane McDonnell (Canada/facilitator), Arlene Ashack (USA), Deirdre Browne (Australia), from the Generalate (Rome) Macarena Fdz de Bobadilla and Brenda Eagan.

Not in the photo: Annie Bromham (England). Unable to attend: Claire Dillon (Ireland), Amparo Martinez (Spain) and Mary Burkart (Ireland)

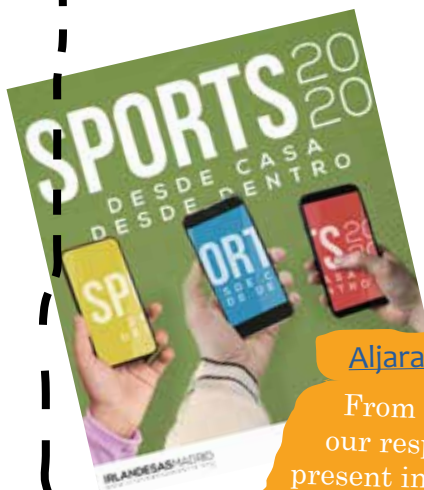
Last May 15 - one year after our initial meeting in Canada - over 15 participants from around the world, including two from the Generalate in Rome, gathered online to reconnect and celebrate the IBVM Arts Ministry.

We enjoyed the freedom to be together, to share and pray together, and to explore our creativity across borders.

We had the opportunity to contemplate how we are one 'circle of friends' across boundaries; we are always 'Together.'



#IrlandesasFromHome, the year we in



Aljarafe (Seville)

From one day to the next Covid-19 forced us to close the doors, but our response was to enlarge our windows, being like this more present in online communication, both with our students and with their families. In a couple of days, we managed to have our website ready with all the necessary information so that the coronavirus did not stop the school year. We knew that in these circumstances we were needed closer than ever, so during these months the teachers have met our students online every day and recorded videos so that they can continue working from home. In addition, we have celebrated a Eucharist online for the deceased, enjoyed the Sports virtually and even recorded a song in which we invited the students to stay at home. If we have learned anything from this difficult situation it is that from adversity we can draw strength, and that has been the case!



Leioa (Biscay)

The coronavirus has caused us all to spend more time at home without being able to have that physical contact that people need so much. To make the confinement much more bearable, teachers and students in Leioa have had a virtual contact of the most emotional and fun. Thus, the famous viral challenges that are so fashionable have been the protagonists. Through these videos, our teachers and the youngest of the houses have been able to be rock stars for a day, have become heroes or heroines of their cartoons, have lived a thousand and one adventures through reading or have imitated emoticons of whatsapp.



Bami (Seville)

During the confinement, our school has continued to be very active. The best example of this has been the idea of Virtual Sports that arose due to the impossibility of doing it in person. We broke records of participation in the challenges we launched by instagram. More than a thousand people dared to send us their videos doing the challenge proposed by each of the houses. We would also like to highlight the video sent by an Infant class to their tutor, a link we have hosted on our website.



#IrlandesasDesdeCien

Invented how to be close from afar

El Soto (Madrid)

During this very complicated situation that we have lived through, our greatest concern has been to be close to and accompany all the families of the school.

Our priority has been to guarantee the continuity of the school year for all students, ensuring that no one was left out. To this end, we have provided access to digital content at every stage, as well as continuing with online classes from Infant Education to High School. Likewise, in order to accompany families and students, we have prepared an orientation site, a special corner dedicated to the Virgin Mary, developed the first online career guidance days, produced video clips of teachers and students giving encouragement to the entire educational community. At the same time, we have collected perishable food to take to the most needy, developed virtual tutorials and taken advantage of the situation to promote the learning and use of ICT. All this added to the initiative “@irlandesasdesdecasa” whose objective was to share in social networks how the day-to-day life was developing in each home.



Loreto (Seville)

There is no better way to teach than by example. In this way, we have to thank the luck of working as a team and of being able to feel close to each other in spite of the confinement... this feeling is present in the houses of our families with whom we have managed to keep close. Teamwork that has also allowed us to celebrate the Sports 2020, the fruit of that union and sense of belonging to this great Loreto family. Thanks to our students, former students, families, AMPA, PAS, teachers and the Virgin of Loreto, who continues to protect our homes from the inside.



Irlandesas (Madrid)

Our school has been particularly affected by confinement, as many of our students' families have few resources, so both communication and online work have been great challenges. However, we've been working with digital tools on a daily basis for some time now, so we've been lucky enough to adapt to the situation quickly. Online classes and coordination between teachers and students have been a constant.

In addition, in our social networks and on [our website](#) we have been updating at all times the academic work and the news related to the coronavirus, registrations and events, such as our Eucharist for the victims of the COVID, the video clips that we have made with our families or the Sports, which we celebrated on June 12 with all our Educational Community. It has been exciting to know that, in spite of everything, we have been able to continue being a great united and fighting family.

Get connected to **Conecta**


If you would like to collaborate with the **Conecta** newsletter by writing, sending some photographs, suggesting a topic, or telling us something interesting to share so that we can write it, please contact us.



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