

PORTLAOISE
PARISH
link
Up
3rd May 2020

Fourth Sunday of Easter

Vocations Sunday

A beautiful hour of 'prayer through song' was transmitted from our Parish Church last Thursday evening. Via Shalom World TV, our parish webcam and parish radio literally 1000's were able to be uplifted, encouraged, entertained through this prayerful and hope filled musical service. If you would like to catch up on it you may access it on https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Cq1-4JR03_E&feature=youtu.be

Our thanks to Nuala Kelly, Aisling Rohan, Georgina Cathcart, Fr. Ciprian, Fr. David and Vivienne Graham.



The Parish Centre 057 8621142

E-mail: info@portlaoiseparish.ie

Parish and Diocesan Websites: www.portlaoiseparish.ie www.kandle.ie

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fb.com/portlaoiselinkup



Pope Francis's Prayer Intention For May 2020

For Deacons

As clergy numbers decline, the role of the deacon becomes increasingly more important. Deacons proclaim the Gospel, preach, assist at Mass, administer the sacrament of Baptism, and officiate at weddings and funerals. Deacons may evangelise through helping the sick and needy. They may be school, hospital or prison chaplains. They may help others by managing their activities, assisting with catechesis, parish or community administration. This month Pope Francis invites us to join this month's prayer intention.

"We pray that deacons, faithful in their service to the Word and the poor, may be an invigorating symbol for the entire Church."



ON LINE DONATIONS

Thank you

There has been a very generous response to our on-line donation facility. We are very grateful for your support at this time.

If you wish to contribute in this way you may do so by visiting our website www.portlaoiseparish.ie and follow the directions to donate. It is a fully secure payment system. We fully appreciate how difficult a time financially this is for so many whose jobs and businesses are effectively locked down.

We are grateful for the support we receive.

Priests of the Parish



Msgr. John Byrne P.P.V.G.
Tel: 057 8621142



Fr. Ciprian Matei C.C.
Tel: 057 8509998



Fr. David Vard C.C.
Tel: 057 8661139



Fr. Eddie Lalor C.C.
Tel: 057 8661605



Fr. Tom O'Connor P.E.
(Parish Chaplain)

To contact the Priest on Duty:
Parish Centre during office hours
Tel: 057 8621142
Outside office hours
in emergency only
Tel: 057 8621364

Safeguarding

All safeguarding statements and policies can be viewed on our website and our Church Porches.

Diocesan Designated Liaison Person
Mick Daly dlp@kandle.ie

Parish Centre



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MANAGER Declan Kelly

Parish Secretaries Michelle Bartley
Agnieszka Kaczmarek

Accounts Michelle Conroy

Sacristans Parish Church

Sr. Sybil and Sr. Julie

(Sacristy phone attended prior to Mass times)

All Masses and services from the Parish Church are live streamed www.portlaoiseparish.ie



Secretary: Julie Conroy

Monday to Thursday

11am to 1pm & 2.15pm to 5pm

057-8692154

Advertising deadline: 12 noon Wednesday

Subject to availability of space

E-mail: linkup@portlaoiseparish.ie

PARISH SHOP

057 8621142



How to be a Person of Discernment

It is not good to hear ourselves described as sheep. Sheep are silly animals that follow each other blindly and do not act or think for themselves. This however is not the imagery intended when Jesus invites us to be 'his flock', rather he is asking us to think of him as our 'good shepherd'.

The voice of Jesus the good shepherd is the one that offers us spiritual sustenance, guidance, love and protection. Jesus wants



us to recognise his voice as the one who addresses what we are and what we stand for. Key to a healthy spiritual life is an overriding commitment to hearing the word of God and applying it to one's own life, but in a world of competing values can we always recognise the voice of Jesus?

The trick is to know that Jesus' voice is everywhere that encourages us to impact our world as Christians. Jesus' voice is the voice at work that encourages us to do our best. Jesus is the voice that encourages us to respond to family members and the wider community who are in need. Jesus' voice is the voice that tells us how to vote and how to campaign for those who do not have a voice of their own. The voice of the impostor on the other hand is everywhere that encourages us to act out of self-interest and greed. Sadly, this has to be an oversimplification. What seems to be the right answer for one person might be completely different for someone else. How is it that armies can fight each other, each believing that God is on their side? How is it that so many different denominations can interpret Jesus' words differently, each believing that they have got it right? How, throughout centuries of history, could heads of states have made such bitter and cruel decisions in God's name?

Clearly, recognising the voice of our shepherd isn't an easy task. Recognising the voice of our shepherd takes discernment, practice and continual self-evaluation. Have we all been doing the same things in the same way year in and year out? Is there anything we could be doing better? Recognising the voice of our shepherd relies on what we already know from scripture, and not what we fondly imagine Jesus might be telling us. Most importantly, recognising Jesus must always be rooted securely in the love for each other and in love for our enemies. If we adhere to this important commandment, then surely Jesus will find us, whoever we are. Being part of Jesus' flock is certainly not for the 'sheep'; it's for those with discerning ears.

Pope Francis writes new prayers, asks Catholics to pray Rosary in May for end to coronavirus pandemic.

Pope Francis asked Catholics to make a special effort in May to pray the rosary, knowing that by doing so they will be united with believers around the world asking for Mary's intercession in stopping the coronavirus pandemic.



"Contemplating the face of Christ with the heart of Mary, our mother, will make us even more united as a spiritual family and will help us overcome this time of trial," the pope said in a letter addressed to all Catholics and released by the Vatican April 25.

The month of May is traditionally devoted to Mary and many Catholics already are in the habit of praying the rosary at home during the month, he noted. "The restrictions of the pandemic have made us come to appreciate all the more this 'family' aspect, also from a spiritual point of view."

"You can decide according to your own situations" whether to pray individually or in groups, he said, noting that "it is easy also on the internet to find good models of prayers to follow." Pope Francis wrote two prayers to Mary that can be recited at the end of the rosary, prayers he said he would be reciting "in spiritual union with all of you."

Both prayers acknowledge Mary's closeness to her son's followers and ask for her protection and for her intercession just as she interceded with Jesus on behalf of the newlyweds at Cana who had run out of wine for their wedding feast.

"We know that you will provide, so that, as at Cana in Galilee, joy and celebration may return after this time of trial," one of the prayers read.

"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," one of the prayers said.

"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," it continued. "Make us strong in faith, persevering in service, constant in prayer."

Here are the texts of two prayers, written by Pope Francis, for the end of the COVID-19 pandemic. He is asking people to recite the rosary and pray these prayers afterward.

"We fly to your protection, O Holy Mother of God."

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 toward 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.

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.

O Mary,

You shine continuously on our journey as a sign of salvation and hope.

We entrust ourselves to you,

Health of the Sick, who, at the foot of the cross, were united with Jesus' suffering, and persevered in your faith.

"Protectress of the Roman people," you know our needs, and we know that you will provide, so that, as at Cana in Galilee, joy and celebration may return after this time of trial.

Help us, Mother of Divine Love, to conform ourselves

to the will of the Father and to do what Jesus tells us.

For he took upon himself our suffering, and burdened himself with our sorrows to bring us, through the cross, to the joy of the Resurrection.

Amen.





He Knows Your Name

Some of you may have seen a branding iron. A branding iron is used to put an identifying mark on cattle and sheep. When a calf is branded, they put the branding iron in a fire and burn the brand into the side of the calf. Ouch! I'll bet that hurts! When a brand is put on sheep, they dip the brand into a special paint and put the brand on the sheep's back. That sounds a little better, doesn't it? Okay, let's talk about branding sheep.

Here is a photo that shows sheep that are branded. →



Do you know why they put a brand on the sheep? They do it so that they will know who owns the sheep. Each rancher has his own special brand. So, if a sheep wanders off and becomes lost or stolen, the brand will prove who owns the sheep.

I don't know whether they put brands on sheep in Jesus' day or not, but Jesus once told about a shepherd who went to a sheep pen to get his sheep. He said that the shepherd knew his sheep and called them by name. When he had called them out, he walked ahead of them and they followed him because they recognised his voice. Jesus said that if a stranger called to the sheep, they would not follow him. In fact, Jesus said they would run away from him because they did not recognise the stranger's voice.

That is a beautiful picture of our relationship with Jesus. Jesus is our shepherd. He loves us and cares for us - he even knows our name. Jesus calls us to follow him and if we belong to him, we will know his voice and we will follow him.

Dear Jesus

Heavenly Father, we are thankful that we have a Shepherd who knows our name. Help us to follow him when he calls. In Jesus' name we pray, Amen.



Hail, Holy Queen

Hail, Holy Queen, Mother of Mercy, hail our life, our sweetness and our hope.

To thee do we cry, poor banished children of Eve; to thee do we send up our sighs, mourning and weeping in this valley of tears.

Turn then most gracious advocate, thine eyes of mercy towards us; and after this our exile, show onto us the blessed fruit of thy womb,

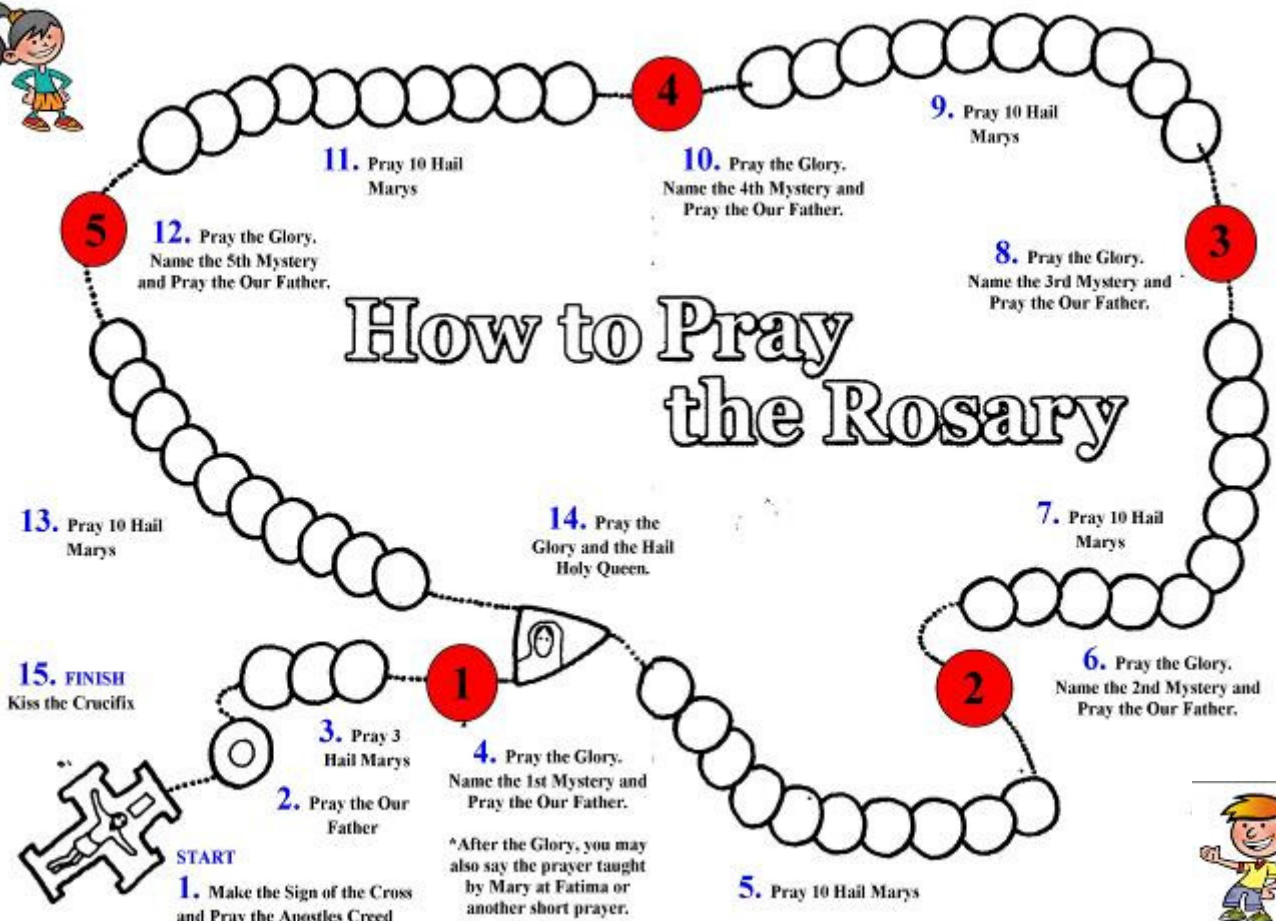


May is the month of Mary.

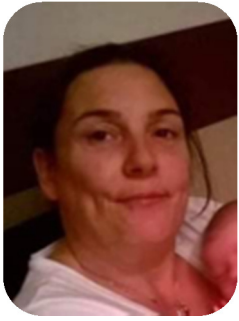


To celebrate the month of May you can make a May altar in your home and pray the Hail Mary.

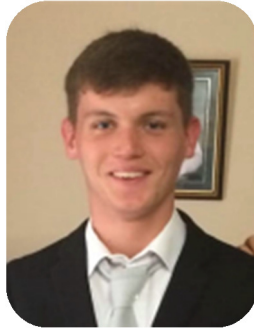
The Rosary is a prayer that we often associate with Mary. The Rosary is divided into 5 decades (sets of ten). Each decade represents an event in Jesus life.



**OUR PRAYERS ARE ASKED FOR
THOSE WHO DIED RECENTLY**



Angeria Kelly
O'Moore Place



Aron Ging
St. John's Square

**Sr. Assumpta
McElduff**
Convent of Mercy, Trim, Co. Meath

MAY THEY REST IN PEACE
Our sympathy to their families

*Come to me, all of you who are tired
from carrying your heavy loads,
and I will give you rest...*



*Praying for those who mourn
during this time of the Coronavirus COVID-19*

Lord of all gentleness,
You are close to the broken-hearted.
We entrust into your care
those who mourn the loss of a loved one this day.
Surround them with your love
and comfort them in their sorrow.
Grant that they may not be overwhelmed by their loss.
May they know the consolation and support
of the Christian community.
Give them confidence in your goodness
and strength to meet the days ahead.
We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.



**In Loving Memory of
BERNARD (BER) DEVANEY**

Newpark, Portlaoise.

Month's Mind Mass will be celebrated on Sunday 3rd May
at 10am in St. Peter and Paul's Church.



Your resting place we visit,
We place some flowers with care,
But no one knows the heartache,
As we turn and leave you there.

Sadly missed by loving wife Phil
and sons Ronan and Aidan,
family and friends.

May Ber Rest in Peace

**In Loving Memory of
RAYMOND BERGIN**

St. John's Square, Portlaoise.

1st Anniversary Mass will be celebrated on 7th May at 10am
in St. Peter and Paul's Church.



Memories are like leaves of gold,
They never tarnish or grow old,
No more tomorrows
for us to share,
But yesterdays memories
will always be there.

First Anniversary to a loving father and husband.
Missed by your wife Mossie and daughters Martina,
Lisa and Sandra and Grandkids xx

Also remembering our late son Dean at this time.
Missed by all xx

May Ray & Dean Rest in Peace

**In Loving Memory of
PATRICIA GALLAGHER**

Late of Glebe, Letterkenny

1st Anniversary Mass will be celebrated in St. Peter & Paul's
Church on Monday, 4th May 2020 at 10am.



God called you name so softly that
only you could hear and no one heard
the footsteps of angels drawing near.

The golden gates stood open
God saw you needed the rest
His garden must be beautiful
He only takes the best.

Forever loved and sadly missed by her sister Elaine Mc Ginn
and family, Portlaoise.

She has gone no further from us than to God,
and God is very near.

May Patricia Rest in Peace



TIME TO THINK!

Don't Quit

Churches are usually very active this time of year, first communions, weddings adding to the Joy of our Easter Season. But this year, with very few exceptions, they are empty. Not just in Ireland but across the world. In Jerusalem's Old City, the Church of the Holy Sepulcher, a major pilgrimage centre for Christians all over the world, has now been closed for six weeks. The last time it was closed to the public for a sustained period was during the Black Plague in the 14th century. At the Vatican, Pope Francis stood alone, speaking before a huge, empty square. "We find ourselves afraid," he said. "And lost."

The coronavirus pandemic of 2020 is doing what wars, depressions and natural disasters have not: shutting down places of worship for Christians all over the world. There is a fundamental challenge to church work when the assembly cannot assemble. The 59 'one another' commands of the New Testament — love one another, forgive one another, rejoice with one another, bear with one another — show how deep and rich the relationships in the church are intended to be. As wonderful as Zoom, Facebook Live and texting are, they cannot facilitate the kind of interactions necessary for such relationships.

There are additional complications when it comes to pastoral care. In-person crisis counselling, comforting people as they die and consoling loved ones in the wake of death is far more difficult. At the moment ministry is regrettably equivocated with misery. The dying, funerals, parishioners really struggling, the brighter aspects, baptisms, Sunday Eucharist, weddings, first communions all are on hold.

One of the reasons Christianity grew so rapidly is that when plagues hit the Roman Empire and so many people, including physicians, rushed out of the city, Christians rushed in to care for the sick, often dying themselves as they did so.

That kind of sacrificial love coupled with incredible courage convinced an unbelieving world that Jesus was Lord. How we live out sacrificial love will be different. We know more about diseases and how they spread than the early Christians did, so we need to follow social-distancing guidelines, but the principle of healing the wounded still applies. If, in this pandemic, Christians care first and care most, we may find ourselves in a whole different dialogue between the church and our culture than what has been primarily a very toxic dialogue. Jesus, Christians and the church may have a better reputation if we rush into care with courage and sacrificial love. What the church can also offer the world, is a reason to care for others, we view each of these men, women and children — no matter their belief or behaviour or anything else — as being made in the image of God and therefore inherently valuable. Christianity provides a kind of anthropology of care and solidarity with others, including those living in the shadows of society. God entered a world filled with suffering but also that through the incarnation God sided with those who suffer and suffered himself. Jesus grew weary. He grieved. He wept. And in anguish at the Mount of Olives, just before he was betrayed, the Gospel of Luke tells us that Jesus "prayed more earnestly, and his sweat was like drops of blood falling to the ground."

What the Christian church can provide at its best is the ability to suffer with hope. The darkest of all Psalms, Psalm 88, which ends with the words "darkness is my closest friend," ... "the God who saves me" - a God to whom the Psalmist cries out day and night. A key part of prayer is lamentation: We lament, not because of the false belief that God is punishing us through this pandemic, but because our ways of life have left so many vulnerable and with so few resources to deal with an epidemic like this. And we lament knowing that God laments with us, and in Jesus lived in solidarity with our pain, and died to heal and liberate us from all brokenness, shame, guilt and self-centeredness."

If Christians are wise, we will emerge from this pandemic as different and better people: more kind and generous, more able to mourn with those who mourn, more able to model how love can cast out fear. There is always reason to hope, even when your eyes are filled with tears.

For a world in the grips of a pandemic, this is a time of tears. For Christians it is as well. But it doesn't end there. The anguish of Good Friday gives way to the glory of Easter Sunday. The hope of what awaits transforms the experience of waiting. But waiting isn't always easy. As the world begins to recovery from this pandemic immediate attention is focussed on the economic impact. I suggest despite the reality of a pandemic recession the greatest recession would be if humanity returns to normal. This is a cathartic moment, when humanity has been forced to pause, heal and recover. Our recovery must not to become slaves to the hecticness of life that perhaps brought us where we find ourselves to be. Slowing down, resting, being still, mindful of the many reasons we have to hope and be grateful. Recovery is always about authenticity. God grant us the serenity to accept the things we cannot change, the courage to change the things we can, and the wisdom to know the difference.....

I love this poem, called 'Don't quit'

Don't quit

**When things go wrong as they sometimes will,
When the road you're trudging seems all up hill,
When the funds are low and the debts are high
And you want to smile, but you have to sigh,
When care is pressing you down a bit,
Rest if you must, but don't you quit.
Life is strange with its twists and turns
As every one of us sometimes learns
And many a failure comes about
When he might have won had he stuck it out;
Don't give up though the pace seems slow—
You may succeed with another blow.
Success is failure turned inside out—
The silver tint of the clouds of doubt,
And you never can tell just how close you are,
It may be near when it seems so far;
So stick to the fight when you're hardest hit—
It's when things seem worst that you must not quit.**

Fr. Paddy invites you to follow him on Twitter @frpaddybyrne, now over 17,000 followers or @AbbeyleixP or check out Paddy Byrne on Facebook.

An Evening of Prayer and Song last Thursday in our Church

'When you sing, you pray twice' St. Augustine.



OUR MUSIC MINISTRY

AMID THE CORONAVIRUS CRISIS

Our Masses and services live streamed via Shalom-World.tv, our own parish webcam and parish radio are gathering people from all over the World as well as our own Parish Community. We have received many emails and messages of appreciation. Particularly mentioned is our wonderful music ministry. We thank all who participate in this for their generously sharing their time and talent with us at this time.

Prayer to Discover Your Vocation

Almighty God,
You have made me to know you,
To love you, and to serve you,
And thereby to find and fulfil myself.
I know that you are in all things
And that every path can lead me to you,
But, of them all, there is one path especially
By which you want me to come to you.
Since I will do what you want of me,
I pray you; send your Holy Spirit to me;
Into my mind to show me what you want of me;
Into my heart to give me the
determination to do it,
And to do it with all my love, with all my mind,
And with all my strength, right to the end.
Amen.

Coronavirus COVID-19

A PARISH INITIATIVE

DURING THIS CRISIS

**For the Elderly and
Vulnerable in our Parish**

If you need any assistance during this time, to pick up prescriptions or to do some shopping, or would like to talk to someone we have a team of volunteers ready to help. Please call

085 2125978.

BEREAVEMENT SUPPORT DURING COVID 19

THE PORTLAOISE PARISH BEREAVEMENT SUPPORT TEAM WOULD LIKE TO OFFER OUR CONDOLENCES TO ALL FAMILIES WHO HAVE LOST A LOVED ONE ESPECIALLY DURING COVID 19 RESTRICTIONS. WE ARE CONSCIOUS THAT THIS IS A VERY DIFFICULT TIME FOR THE BEREAVED AND HAVE INCLUDED SOME INFORMATION FOR YOU TO ACCESS SHOULD YOU REQUIRE SUPPORT.

**IRISH HOSPICE FOUNDATION
SUPPORT DURING CARONAVIRUS**
www.bereaved.ie

**HSE BEREAVEMENT SUPPORT
DURING CARONAVIRIS** www.hse.ie

**PORTLAOISE PARISH BEREAVEMENT
SUPPORT 087 9878300**

PRAYER AT TIME OF BEREAVEMENT

Lord, you are close
to the broken hearted
Be with me now in
my grief and loneliness.
Give me courage to face loss
and not grieve in silence
Be with me as I struggle with the many
different and painful feelings.
Ease the hurt in my heart
Encircle me in your love.
Help me to believe that one day I will
no longer have this deep sorrow.
May I find comfort in sharing my grief
with those who understand
the strong bonds of love
Stay with me, Lord support me
Help me to know your power is at work
within me as I deal with my grief.