

Lockdown Stories: Giving and Receiving

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By Sr Juliet fcJ, from the FCJ Community in Bucharest

Our lives have changed radically in the last two to three weeks, as the coronavirus sneaked into Europe, and into Eastern Europe too. Suddenly we were asked to be more careful about handwashing, and keeping a social distance from each other, no more shaking hands at the sign of peace in church, schools were closed, avoiding crowded situations and so on. A new reality, the unknown, not so comfortable. The President announced restrictions to our freedom, “Stay home” he said, especially if you are over 65!! Now no public liturgy, but live streaming and the possibility of being present at Mass in different parts of the world!!

We FCJ s were reminded that we are [women of hope and energy for a Broken Church and World](#). We were invited to be part of a Day of Prayer for all Religious. We suddenly had time and more time together as community... and how important it is to watch out for each other as we adapt to a new routine.

I was very touched by the generosity and caring outreach which we received from three families in our international parish community, here in Bucharest, who texted us to check that we were all right, and were anxious to help us if we needed anything. Then last Sunday, an American family, who had their own difficulties, and whose twin daughters had been in my First Holy Communion preparation class, and had made their First Holy Communion in May, came into town and brought us a bag of basics, food and drink, some paracetamol and disinfectant. The girls had made cards to remind us the God is with us, and that Jesus is our good shepherd!! They waved from inside the car, each wearing the face mask. A wonderful moment of kindness and solidarity.

“ Yes, great things are happening, a new opportunity to live community differently and keep in touch with friends, and family as well as lonely people who need our support, to widen our circle of love.

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As the [2019 FCJ General Chapter Calls](#) remind us, *we want to live with deeper conviction as consecrated women, giving all that we are and all that we have...*

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“ Never give way to discouragement, for it will be our ruin. Courage and confidence! Let that be your motto. (1837) ”

Marie Madeleine d'Houët

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