



# WORCESTER CATHEDRAL

## WORCESTER CATHEDRAL UNDER LOCKDOWN

**By Canon Georgina Byrne**

2020 was supposed to be the 'Year of Cathedrals' and the 'Year of Pilgrimage'. Cathedrals across the country were looking forward to welcoming visitors, to offering new ways for people to explore these historic buildings and to pray. We can pray anywhere, but people come to Worcester Cathedral to enjoy its peace and prayerful atmosphere.

Since closing in March, we have encouraged prayer via our Facebook page. Along with live-streamed acts of worship, there is a daily 'thought for the day'. In the first phase of the Lockdown, we offered poems from our Poet in Residence, Amanda Bonnick. Amanda had already written fourteen poems, inspired by the Stations of the Cross, the fourteen-stage contemplative journey a Christian might make, following the last hours of Jesus' life. We had hoped to hang the printed poems in the Cathedral, for visitors to read. Instead, they appeared on Facebook.

The Dean and Canons have written themed reflections: on the Gospel readings, on the story of the Road to Emmaus, on inspiring gifts, and on the mercies. We have tried to connect the cathedral building we love with the faith that people live out at home or at work.

This week, we are inviting people to make a pilgrimage in their own home. Pilgrimage is normally associated with travelling, or making a physical journey, but the more important pilgrim journey is the one we make into our own lives. Pilgrimage encourages us to think about our inner world as we travel the outer one. We can do this, very simply, at home. For example, we might pause in the kitchen and be thankful for all that nourishes us or look out of the window and pray for our neighbours.

We have been greatly inspired and encouraged by the responses we have received. The Christian community is dispersed, but it remains connected by prayer – and we are glad to be part of it.

**Published Wednesday 13 May 2020**