

Once a week, at 7.40am, children on their way to school, office workers and all kinds of local people attend the Spiritual Gym at Marylebone Church in London.

Father Jack (a priest with a dog collar) is shown in his church with the altar below him

The Spiritual Gym invitation is simple: a gospel reading, a time of silence and then Eucharist. It draws all ages to a time of quiet reflection before work, school, or whatever the day may bring.

“We are good at thinking about our physical health,” said Assistant Priest and Chaplain to Schools, Father Jack Noble.

“Increasingly, we’re good at thinking about our mental health – but we are less good at our spiritual health.

“We wanted to help with that.”

During lockdown, the service went online, and became an instant hit with between 200 and 300 people joining in from around the world, from Nigeria to the USA.

Spiritual Gym helps “begin the day in the right way” explains Fr Jack.

“You just come before Jesus – and stay there.

“There’s no more precious thing in the world.”

One of those who has found the Spiritual Gym a helpful addition to life is classical singer Louisa Beard.

“At the Spiritual Gym I feel grounded” she said.

“It’s a beautiful idea. It can be very hard to be still and be with God and to make time to pray,” she said, “it’s amazing how powerful it is.”

After a few months online, the Spiritual Gym is back in real live form, at least for now. Fr Jack said that he is “really surprised” by its popularity.

“I thought I might be here by myself,” he laughs.

But he is not.

Families, including babes-in-arms, and every kind of city worker and dweller attends.

“It’s not novel, or jazzy, and yet it seems to be something that people can grasp,” says Fr Jack.

More information:

- The Church of England's [Vision and Strategy for the 2020s](#) is helping us to be a Church which proclaims and lives out the Good News of Jesus Christ afresh in every generation.

