

Faith in times of crisis

My dear parishioners,

Our world and daily lives seem to be upside down right now. Whether it's uncertainty, fear or panic caused by the Coronavirus, tornadoes in Tennessee, or the wild stock market, our faith should help us to calm our anxieties and the natural tendency to fall into social unrest or chaos.

St. Paul, who endured great contradictions during his life, reminds us about the power of faith in order to keep our peace, self-control and confidence in difficult circumstances,

"Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God" (Philippians, 4:6).

A very important thing to remember at this time is that fear, anxiety, lack of control, worrying about the "what if's" in life, will completely drain our strength, peace and energy. Our Christian way of life calls for a different way to live -our response should be turning our fears to the Lord.

We all know, trust and love the Lord, and we know that He and His Holy Mother are with us through this pandemic experience. Therefore, the uncertainties, fears and anxieties of our society right now should provide us with three wonderful opportunities to model and offer kindness and peace,

- First, to kindly share with others both the Gospel message and our personal relationship with the Lord.

As St. Peter clearly reminds us,

"But in your hearts revere Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect" (1 Peter 3:15).

Whenever we have the chance to speak with friends, coworkers, neighbors or family members who are afraid and wondering why we are not, right there and then, we all have the perfect opportunity to share with them the hope and peace we find in our close friendship with the Lord.

- Secondly, to follow the calling to model the difference that Christ makes in our outlook and attitudes,

The great prophet Isaiah reminds us of an incredible promise especially in times of pain and preoccupation,

***“So do not fear, for I am with you;
do not be dismayed, for I am your God.
I will strengthen you and help you;
I will uphold you with my righteous right hand”*** (Isaiah 41:10)

This is a beautiful attitude that only a Lord-follower can adopt in times such as these. During this time of deep personal and social crisis, let’s make a daily and lasting choice to trust in the Lord and in His plan, no matter what. He is more than able to take on our worries, our burdens, our panic, our pain and our fear. Let’s model that trust and subsequent peace to others!

- Finally, to offer the same compassion, understanding and care that Jesus would show in a situation like ours.

St. Matthew states in his Gospel that,

“When [the Lord] saw the multitudes, He was moved with compassion for them, because they were weary and scattered, like sheep having no shepherd” (Matthew 9:36).

Most certainly, you must have noticed how Jesus’ love and compassion was ALWAYS followed by ACTION. What an example for us today! Instead of negativity, fear, panic or anxiety, let’s take POSITIVE ACTION. Let’s actively look for the opportunities to share with others our faith in the Lord, to model Christlikeness, and to serve others in their spiritual and material needs. Let’s not forget that we will soon dwell in a better place. Let us pray for peace as our society heals from this pandemic. At the same time, let us work together to avoid community spreading as we assist and support each other.

For the time being, St. Rose of Lima clergy and staff want to keep in contact with you and we are looking into the various opportunities to do so in a meaningful way. Currently, Monday through Friday, the chapel is open from 11:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m.. On Thursdays, there will be Adoration (11:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m.) and confessions (7:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.) followed by the Solemn Blessing of the Most Holy Sacrament. We need to ask you to be mindful of social distancing as you pray or wait for sacramental confession.

May our Lord and His Holy Mother Mary be with you all. Please know that Fr. Oscar and I are here both to serve and keep you in our daily prayers.

Finally, allow me to share with you one of my favorite prayers in times of need. God bless you!

“Remember, O most gracious Virgin Mary, that never was it known that anyone who fled to thy protection, implored thy help, or sought thine intercession was left unaided. Inspired by this confidence, I fly unto thee, O Virgin of virgins, my mother; to thee do I come, before thee I stand, sinful and sorrowful. O Mother of the Word Incarnate, despise not my petitions, but in thy mercy hear and answer me. Amen.”

Yours in Christ



Fr. Agustin Mateo Ayala



Fr. Oscar Astigarraga
