

Families

I cannot believe that we are now almost 9 weeks since classes were held at our Parishes. Our last class was March 8th and the last Mass held in our churches was March 15th. Hopefully with the re-opening of the County in phases, we should be able to attend Mass in the very near future. Once there is information from the Diocese, I will advise you all.

I am a lover of history and enjoy research about our Catholic Faith. So much that one of the courses for our confirmation students is Church history. This week is the apparition of Our Lady of Fatima, so why not give a brief history lesson on Fatima.

On May 14, 1917 Our Lady appeared in Fatima. Please share with your children the story of how Our Lady appeared to 3 children at Fatima on the 13th day for 6 consecutive months from May to October of 1917. The 3 children Lucia dos Santos and her cousins, Jacinta and Francisco described her as the Lady of the Rosary. Mary asked them to say the Rosary every day. Mary stated that devotion to the Rosary was the key to personal and world peace.

It is said that on July 13, the Virgin revealed the three secrets of Fatima. The first vision was the vision of World War I ending and the World War II beginning. The 2nd was the rise and fall of the Soviet Communism. The 3rd was a vision of a bishop in white falling to the ground under a hail of gunfire. This was interpreted by the church as a foretelling of the assassination attempt on Pope John Paul II's life in 1981. The pope credited the Virgin Mary of Fatima with saving his life.

On the last apparition of the Virgin, there was a large crowd of 70,000 plus in a rainstorm to witness the arrival of the Virgin Mary on October 13. This is now known as the Sun Miracle of Fatima. Around noon, the rain clouds parted, the sky opened up. The sun seemed to spin in the sky, change colors and go dark for several minutes before appearing to plunge to the earth. Many people agreed to have seen a miracle that day. Only the children saw the Virgin Mary that day.

The two cousins Jacinta and Francisco died in 1919 due to the Spanish flu. On May 13, 2000 in Fatima, St. John Paul II beatified them. Both children were canonized by Pope Francis at the Sanctuary of Fatima on May 13, 2017. During this time of the Coronavirus these two young saints who died during the influenza epidemic of 1918 are among the ideal to intercede for us at this time.



Lucia was the oldest of the children of Fatima. She entered the religious order with the St. Dorothy Sisters and later entered the Carmel of St. Teresa in 1948 taking the name of Sr. Maria Lucia of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, a Carmelite nun. During her religious life Sr. Lucia was to have another of other visions of the Our Lady in 1925, 1936 and 1929. The Blessed Virgin the petition of Our Lady of the Five First Saturdays of Reparation and the vision of the Trinity with the petition of the consecration of Russia. She passed away in February of 2005 at the age of 97.

While at this time we are stressed due to the current status, but let us remember what Our Lady of Fatima told the children, that the Rosary is the key to personal and world peace. Consider saying the Rosary for peace in our lives at this time.

And now about this week's Gospel reading, as we do not have Fr. Arthur giving us his great homilies, I will do my best to give you my personal reflection of the Gospel reading.

This week we read from the Gospel of John 14:15-21. In this Gospel, Jesus talks about love and keeping his commandments and another advocate, the Holy Spirit. "If you love me, you will keep my commandments. And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Advocate to be with you forever. This is the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees him nor knows him. You know him, because he abides with you, and he will be in you "

I want to focus on the love that Jesus is talking about. There are different levels of love. We often say that we love our neighbors without really knowing who they are. There is also the kind of love we feel for friends, for children, for spouses, and even a type of love we reserve for things like ice cream and back scratches.



Additional information

David Barosci from Pflaum publishing has provided the last few lessons from the Gospel Weeklie. Please feel free to work with your children on the Gospel Weeklie associated with your children's grade.

The Diocese of Syracuse has set up a website for those who wish to make their contributions to the Parishes thru this website. The donations will go directly to the Parish. Please go to <https://syracuseiocese.org/foundation/helpyourparish>. You can locate our parish and make your donation there or you may drop off your contributions to the Parishes directly if you wish.

Kathy Poupart has asked that families from St. Patrick/St. Anthony's please use the Parish website for your weekly donations.

May 21 is Solemnity of the Ascension of the Lord. The Diocese of Syracuse has extended the dispensation of the obligation to now include Holy Days of Obligation, therefore the Diocese has indicated the faithful are not obligated to attend Mass. They recommend we should still observe this Solemnity by participating in streamed Masses and by devoting ourselves to prayer.

Again, I hope that you share with your families these weekly reflections. Please stay safe and hope to see you all soon.

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