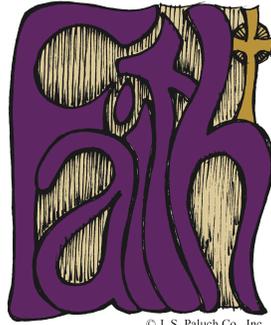




St. Luke the Evangelist Catholic Community

Reflections with Fr. Mark

April 20, 2020



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Dear Parishioners,

Today has significant meaning for us as a society and for me as an individual. Today is the 21st anniversary of the Columbine massacre. A school shooting that would take the lives of thirteen people who would have never predicted that to be their last day on earth. Three years ago today, we lost a good priest of the Church and a good friend, Fr. Leo Alberg. I happened to be in Puerto Rico for a wedding of a faculty member from St. Luke when I received the phone call from Fr. Marc Trudeau that Fr. Leo had literally dropped dead of a heart attack while taking an evening walk after dinner in Burbank. He was alone and I am certain he had no idea that that day would be his last on earth. There will always be events in our journey of life and faith that shake us to the core and cause us to question, but the answer is always the same: Death will never have the last word.

I remember how helpless I felt being thousands of miles away while receiving phone calls from the Archdiocese inquiring about how to reach his family members. I had to surrender to this powerlessness from afar and place my trust in God. In the ensuing weeks, I had to plan a funeral with his family and ultimately lay a friend to rest. His burial would be at the cathedral months after the funeral and when Marc and I arrived to greet the small gathering of family, we had to have a sense of humor. If you remember Fr. Leo, he was not a small man, yet we were placing him in a small niche in the mausoleum of the Cathedral. Fr. Marc remarked, "Leo would be happy to know that he is going to fit in that space!" We all burst into laughter to release some of the more emotional moments of the previous months.

In the most emotional moments of our life journey we must also look for life and new life. New ways of doing things and change from the usual way of seeing things. After each loss in the tragedy of violence we promise to make things different, but that really means "we" need to change. In the loss of a loved one to death, we are invited to enter the mystery of Christ's death. We have living faith and we trust that death is not the end. As St. Paul reminds us: Our earthly tent is destroyed and our spirit lives on. Our faith sustains us in these difficult moments of life when our hope could be stripped away.

So, my friends, as we continue our time of confinement and living the storm of Coronavirus, let us look for the rays of hope and be the rays of hope for others. May we be inspired by the wonderful spirit of unity we see and throw out the "old yeast" that holds us hostage to a life of bitterness and regretful judgment. Let the light of God's love penetrate intransigence and sprout new life in you like the Spring calling forth life from a scorched Earth. God is life and love and we are of God. Shine forth God's presence in you by the choice to be different than when you entered this "tomb of pandemic"; and, emerge from this cocoon of transformation into the new creature God has called forth. And, as always, amid all, keep a sense of humor.

Happy Easter! He is Risen! Alleluia!

Fr. Mark

Watch Sunday Mass from St. Luke at Home: The recordings are available on our Parish website, www.stluketemplecity.org, and sent through our e-communications. The services will remain posted so you may view at your convenience.

Please visit our Parish Website for continued COVID-19 information related to parish activities and previous e-communications: <https://stluketemplecity.org/covid-19>