



St. Luke the Evangelist Catholic Community

Reflections with Fr. Mark

April 29, 2020



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Dear Parishioners,

Today, we celebrate the Memorial of St. Catherine of Siena, Virgin and Doctor of the Church, who lived in the 14th Century. She served with love in all ways and did not distinguish between feeding the poor in Siena or admonishing the pope in Avignon. She led a life of prayer and service, interceding for others and the whole of the Church. St. Catherine advises us, "Preach the truth as if you had a million voices. It is silence that kills the world." We honor her today in our prayer as we hold up her ability to be humble, yet speak to power.

Jesus was like us in all things but sin. We know he felt every emotion and struggled with the lack of faith in others. However, he walked with everyone who was humble enough to allow Him to do so. Even in the face of death he asked the Father "to let this cup pass from me"; but, submitted to the will of the Father. As the Scriptures say, "He was obedient even unto death." How do you feel about that word: "obedience." The root of the word means: to listen or to hear. In the context of Scripture, we can translate that into "listening or hearing the wisdom" of God or the other.

Disobedience, then, is the opposite, and to close oneself off from the wisdom of God or another and to do your own will. We see such "disobedience" in the life of faith and life. We see people "disobeying" the directives of the civil authorities and Church authorities because they feel they don't have to listen. I had a local Protestant pastor speak with me the other day about one of my neighboring parishes that were disobeying the current directives and asking me if this was "kosher." I assured him that the Pastor was in direct opposition to the Archbishop and acting in disobedience. Why would this Pastor go against the vows of his superiors and the civil leadership? Is it a sense of religious freedom? Or is it an act of selfishness or an incorrect view of holiness?

We know people are feeling anxious about many things these days but that does not allow us to act in defiance because we feel our moral judgment allows us to put lives in danger. As we move ahead, life and faith practices are going to be very different. We will not be having meetings and gatherings as normal practice. When, and not too soon, we return to celebrating Mass, the occupancy is going to be very limited and with all safety practices in place that we have been using these past weeks. We will have a ministry of "sanitizers" to wipe everything down after each gathering. We will not be holding hands, receiving the chalice, giving a physical sign of peace, or receiving the host on the tongue. Life will be different. Now, we can begin to understand this and move on with a gracious outlook or we can allow this to cause anxiety and allow negativity to rule our life. We just don't know what measures will be in place once things begin to open; but I think we all know it's not going to be the same.

Let us adopt the humility of Christ and listen to the wisdom around us that is developing. Let us see the goodness that this pandemic has brought out of the hearts of people. Let us thank God for the ability to worship faithfully even if it is

not in our preferred way. Let us submit ourselves to the will of God who simply calls us to: “love God and one another!” Anything else could be mistaken for selfishness and disobedience.

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>