

CHURCH OF ST. PATRICK

53 ST. PATRICK'S PLACE STATEN ISLAND, NY 10306

April 12, 2020

Dear Parishioner,

Many people say: How can God let this happen? First of all God didn't cause the coronavirus outbreak. Disease is evil and it comes from Satan. God is only good (God with an extra "o") and all good comes from Him. This evil disease is the very opposite of God. A passage that has been circulating on the internet recently shows this clearly.

Satan: I will cause anxiety, fear, and panic. I will shut down businesses, school, places of worship and sports events. I will cause economic turmoil.

Jesus: I will bring together neighbors, restore the family unit, I will bring dinner back to the kitchen table. I will help people slow down their lives and appreciate what really matters. I will teach my children to rely on me and not on the world. I will teach my children to trust me and not their money or material resources.

God brings good out of evil. The greatest evil in the world was the Crucifixion, and the greatest good in the world came out of it; the Resurrection. That is the pattern. Romans 8:28 says: "We know God makes all things work together for the good ..."

We don't always see the good when we are in the middle of evil but we have to trust that God is working to do something about this pandemic and that He has the power to do it.

In Matthew's Passion Account, which would have been read on Palm Sunday, Peter draws his sword to fight against the Roman soldiers and Temple police, but Jesus tells him to put back his sword. He says "Do you not suppose that I can call on my Father to provide at a moment's notice more than 12 legions of angels? "Do the math! A legion has 6,000 soldiers, 12 legions have 72,000. A single angel in Isaiah 37 obliterated 185,000 men. That would mean 72,000 angels could destroy 13,320,000,000 (more than the present population of the world). And they are only angels. Jesus is God.

Jesus is telling Peter: You can't beat the Romans Empire, but I have all power in heaven and on earth (Mt. 28:18), and I can beat them and win the victory for you. Jesus is telling us: You can't beat this virus even with all your defensive measures. Only I, with my almighty power, can win the victory over this pandemic. I will use your defensive measures, your social distancing, your hand washing, your vigilance. I will use your doctors, your nurses, your first responders, your scientists, your military. I will work through them, but ultimately it is I who will accomplish it. "Apart from Me you can do nothing" Jn 15:5. "Unless the Lord guard the city they labor in vain who guard it." Psalm 127.1b. I will rescue you.

Some of you I will rescue back to this life and others I will rescue into Eternal Life. I had to die and be rescued into Resurrected Glory. Some of you will receive that glory now, and others of you will receive it when your time comes later – but I want all of you to have it. I want all of you to "become like angels"

(Luke 20:36) and live with Me in the place I have prepared for you, where “there will be no more death or mourning, crying out or pain” (Rev. 21:4), where “this corruptible body is clothed in incorruptibility, this mortal body is clothed in immortality (1 Cor. 15:53), where “I make all things new (Rev. 21:5).

We celebrate the Resurrection, which has meaning for us today and forever. Jesus lives. In our hearts and in our world. We can trust in Him and His Power to get us through this crisis, and, ultimately we can trust in Him to get us through every crisis until He finally gets us through the crisis (death) which ends all crises and brings us into Resurrection with Him.

Remember as our former pastor Aldo Tos said, “Good Friday is just one day. Easter is forever.”

Even in the midst of all the chaos may you experience the Risen Lord in your hearts and your families.

God bless you,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Jeffrey B. Conway". The signature is written in black ink and has a fluid, connected style.

Jeff Conway, Pastor

JPC/smb