

**The Bells of St. Mary's
The Church of the Immaculate Conception**

**Twelfth Sunday In Ordinary
Time Happy Father's Day June 21, 2020**

From Rev. Fr. Anthony Ekanem, MSP

WITNESSING IN SPITE OF FEAR

On behalf of our Parish Family, we wish all fathers, grandfathers, and stepfathers, godfathers, a Happy Father's Day! Five weeks ago, we observed Mother's Day and offered Mass for our mothers. We even encouraged our parish community members to feel free to visit the graveside of their dear ones at the Cemetery but to follow the "Faith Forward Guidelines." Today, on this Father's Day, we are doing the same – offering our Dads, living or dead, on the altar of God during this Holy Mass and invoking our Heavenly Father's blessings on them.

As we honor and thank God for our fathers today, we hear Jesus reassuring and reminding His disciples of the tender care of His Heavenly Father. Our heavenly Father watches over us faithfully and lovingly, even the hairs on our heads. Therefore, we should not be afraid. Today, we hear Jesus asking us to be His witnesses in the world despite fear. We are all sick of what is happening around us today; we are all tired, scared, worried, and even disgusted while watching all these on the news. What next are we to do? The unrest in our country seems to stem from fear, anger, frustration, and systematic injustices. Where do we begin to address these viruses?

As Christians, we are encouraged by Jesus not to lose heart, not to fear rather bear witness openly to our faith. Jesus says to us what He said to His first disciples, "Do not be afraid of those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul; instead, be afraid of the one who can destroy both soul and body in Gehenna." In the Gospel reading today, Jesus calls us for witnessing, that is, people who are not afraid to be seen as followers of His out there amid an unbelieving and hostile world. Fear is one of the things that can keep Christians from a bold and generous witnessing to the Gospel. Three times today in the reading, Jesus said to the apostles, 'Do not be afraid.' Fortunately, they are some who have overcome fear and witnessed to the Gospel.

Oscar Romero is an outstanding example. When he was made Archbishop of San Salvador in 1977, he was a conservative, but later changed when he saw what was happening. Every Sunday, the Archbishop preached at the Cathedral. His homilies so electrified the country that national affairs halted when he spoke from the altar. The Archbishop made public the unspeakable crimes committed by many agents of the government. He was under constant threat of death — some of his friends murdered. And still, he would not be silenced. Nor would he go into hiding or exile. 'At first sight of danger, the shepherd cannot run and leave the sheep to fend for themselves. I will stay with my people,' he said. He was shot dead in March 1980 while celebrating Mass.

According to Romero, it didn't take courage. All it took was to understand that his enemies dealt in fear and was not afraid of them; they would have no power over him. They might be able to kill his body, but they could not and would not kill his soul. Someone once said, "sometimes what you are most afraid of doing is the very thing that will set you free."

Even though we may not aspire to such heights of heroism, a person like that is an inspiration to us. The words of Christ surely apply to them: "If anyone declares himself for me before men, I will declare myself for him before my Father in heaven." Today we are all in panic mode, calling to express our Christian trust, faith, and courage in our lives. It is normal and natural that courage will sometimes fail us, and that we will be afraid. All those who have accomplished great things in this life have known fear at one time or another. We think of the prophet Jeremiah (First Reading), or Martin Luther King, and Jesus Himself in the garden of Gethsemane. During this unrest in America, you can also name a few individuals who have proven to be unafraid to witness to justice and charity in our world.

Fear is not necessarily a bad thing. Fear sometimes has a protective function, warning us of the presence of danger. In this case, fear is a grace. Nevertheless, anxiety can be a handicap. It can paralyze a person. It can turn a person into a coward. Jesus knew that the apostles were terrified. I know parents who are very worried about their children or family members when they are outside especially passed their curfew time. When He said to their apostles, do not be scared, He was addressing their fears and trying to warn them.

How did He suggest they might overcome their fears? It was basically through trust in God and reliance on God. He urges them to have complete faith in God, who lovingly watches over the life and death of even the smallest and least creatures like the sparrows. Jesus assured them that God knew every detail of their lives, and would support them in whatever their crisis maybe.

The prophet Jeremiah lived out his vocation during a time of great turmoil, which saw their defeat of Israel and the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple. He lived with constant threats to his life. Yet, despite everything, he remained faithful to his calling. "But the Lord is with me, like a mighty champion." That was his conviction that God was on his side 'as a mighty hero.'

To live a Christian life requires courage. But then any meaningful living requires courage. What life needs is not so much heroism as ordinary courage. Courage is the most important of all virtues because, without courage, you can't practice any other virtue with constancy. Faith is an excellent source of courage. As people of faith, we believe that God will give us the strength to cope with whatever comes.

Dear Fathers, as we celebrate you this day, let, "Your love be sincere. Detest what is evil, cling to what is good. Love one another with the affection of brothers. Anticipate each other in showing respect. Do not grow slack but be fervent in spirit; he whom you serve is the Lord. Rejoice in hope, be patient under trial, preserve in prayer." (Romans 12:9-12)

Stewardship

Tithing - God's Plan for Giving on Sunday, June 7 & 14, 2020 our Offering was \$4,538

*Today's second collection is for Church Property Insurance.

CONTINUE TO JOIN US FOR MASS LIVESTREAM BY GOING TO: <https://icmary103.com>

(The Spanish & English Weekend Masses)

Saturday: 5:00 PM English

Sunday: 11:00 AM English

Saturday 7:30 PM Spanish

Sunday: 9:00 PM Spanish

Note: Although we are permitted to reopen for Public worship, there is no obligation that one must attend Masses in Church especially if one is vulnerable, afraid, or uncomfortable about joining at Mass this time. We will encourage everyone to come into our Church through the main door during this time and go out through the side / Chapel door.

CONTINUED FINANCIAL SUPPORT, We urge all who can to please consider joining the online We Share automated giving program by going to: <https://icmary.churchgiving.com/> to set up automatic giving to keep our staff, clergy, and buildings ready for us when this crisis ends, as it will. After the page opens, look around We Share at the collection opportunities and click on the yellow button, "Make a Donation", and follow directions. God bless you for your continuing sacrifices.

Please, continue to bring your collection envelopes or any contribution you wish to make to help support our parish, staff and our utility expenses to our Church by mailing or dropping your envelope at the Parish Office. Thank you

INFORMATION

Flynn Memorial Home, Inc.

Have been providing us with calendar every year. As a private business and a sign of appreciation on our part to them, I wish to appeal to you to remember and support them when you are making plans for funeral arrangements.

Parish Rectory Boiler Update

Already, we have been able to put down half the cost of installing a new Boiler in the Parish Rectory, and we are still in need of \$14,000 when the installation is complete.

An Appeal

I ask you, if possible, to consider an additional donation whenever you can add especially to these extra expenses so that we can serve you better. In most of our structures, in other words, the facilities here are obsolete, and we need to maintain them. I know many of you have asked us or expressed concern over how we are coping during this coronavirus pandemic. It is by the grace of God and your generosity that we can manage so far. I wish to strongly appeal to others who are behind in their contribution to the Church and those who feel they will like to support more to call the Parish Office at any time, and we can share more with you what we need and where we are financial. Yes, we have all stretched money wise during this crisis.

Sundays Readings:

First Reading: Jeremiah 20: 10-13 (94A)

Jeremiah found comfort and strength in the Lord though his friends sought to trap him and take vengeance on him. He praised God and entrusted his cause to the Lord.

Responsorial Psalm: Psalm 69: 8-10, 14, 17, 33-35 Lord, in your great love, answer me.

Second Reading: Romans 5: 12-15 Paul the apostle believed death entered the world through sin, but life comes

Gospel: Matthew 10: 26-33 Jesus encouraged his apostle not to be intimidated or afraid because “Everyone who acknowledges me before others I will acknowledge before my heavenly Father.” He comforted them, assuring that in God’s eye their worth exceeds a flock of sparrows. God knows them intimately and cares for them.

Religious Education

Religious Education Students and Parents at St. Mary’s, We have on line the new registration for the Religious Education program on the website.

1. Please note that we need every child’s parent email so that we can send information about the Religious Education information.
2. Anyone who would want to reach Marisa Rivera, please email to icmary103@gmail.com.

Archdiocesan Appeal

Update of 2020 Appeal Goals Goal: \$37,500.00 Pledged: \$31,452.00 Paid: \$24,000.00

Thank you very much for your contributions toward our Annual Cardinal’s Appeal and Re - new and Re - build Campaign. We still need more pledges to reach our goal with the Annual Cardinal’s Appeal. Please, help!

May Update of Renew & Rebuild Goal \$409,000.00 Pledges: \$420,984.30 Paid: \$230,321.50 Left: (\$190,662.80)

Thank you for all your generosity!

Mass Intention for the week of June 20 to June 28, 2020

Saturday, June 20, 2020

12:05 - pm - Available/Disponibile

5:00 pm - Father’s Day Novena

7:30 pm - Father’s Day Novena

Sunday, June 21, 2020

7:30 am - Father’s Day Novena

9:00 am - Father’s Day Novena

11:00 am - Father’s Day Novena

Monday, June 22, 2020

8:15 am - Father’s Day Novena

12:05 pm - Father’s Day Novena

Tuesday June 23, 2020

8:15 am - Father’s Day Novena

12:05 pm - Father’s Day Novena

Wednesday, June 24, 2020

8:15 am - Available/Disponibile

12:05 pm - Available/Disponibile

Thursday, June 25, 2020

8:15 am - Available/Disponibile

12:05 pm - Available/Disponibile

7:00 pm - Anthony Cabrales + * George & Carmen Cabrales

Friday, June 26, 2020

8:15 am - Available/Disponibile

12:05 pm - Available/Disponibile

Saturday, June 27, 2020

12:05 - pm - Available/Disponibile

5:00 pm - Joanne Kunny + Bob & Marge Esposito

7:30 pm - Anita Martinez + * Sus Hijos

Sunday, June 28, 2020

7:30 am - Missa Pro Populo

9:00 am - Jacóbo Tovar + * Torivio Tovar

11:00 am - George J. Russ + * Jenny Brown

+Indicates deceased *Indicates the person (s) who requested the Mass.

We still have days open for you to book Masses for your dear ones.

We still have some days open for you to book for Masses for special intention

PRAYER

A PRAYER TO HELP US ALL THROUGH THIS COVID-19 CRISIS:

Prayer to the Virgin Mary for Protection

O Mary, you shine continuously on our journey as a sign of salvation and hope.

We entrust ourselves to you, Health of the Sick.

At the foot of the Cross you participated in Jesus’ pain,
with steadfast faith.

You, Our Lady of New York, know what we need.

We are certain that you will provide, so that,

as you did at Cana of Galilee,

joy and feasting might return after this moment of trial.

Help us, Mother of Divine Love,

to conform ourselves to the Father’s will and to do what Jesus tells us:

He who took our sufferings upon Himself, and bore our sorrows to bring us,

through the Cross, to the joy of the Resurrection. Amen.

We seek refuge under your protection, O Holy Mother of God.

Do not despise our pleas – we who are put to the test –

and deliver us from every danger, O glorious and blessed Virgin.

Formed.org

Our parish has a free subscription to www.formed.org which gives you 24/7 access to over 300 quality Catholic on line programs, 99 + E-Books

- Go to formed.org .
- Click on “sign up”,
- Click on “I belong to a parish or organization”.
- Start typing name—Immaculate Conception St. Mary’s Church Yonkers NY. You will see a number of parishes with this name).
- Scroll to Immaculate Conception St Mary’s Church Yonkers, NY.

- Hit Next, - create account with your name and email.

- After creating your account the next time you want to go on simply type in your web browser formed.org and it

will bring you to the website. In the upper right corner you will then see sign in. Click that and you are set to enjoy all the wonderful resources. I would highly suggest during this time you sample some of the movies that they offer. Enjoy!

Congratulation for your Priestly Ordination Anniversary

Rev. Fares Hattar ~ June 15

Rev. George Okoro, MSP ~ June 27

Rev. Tony Ekanem, MSP ~ July 1