

3/18/20

Dear Parishioners,

On Monday before we dismissed the students from the parish school we gathered them for a brief assembly to explain in simple terms what was happening. At the very end I asked them if there was a way that we could all be connected even if we were physically apart. One student responded “texting”; another, “Facebook”. I acknowledged that they were both right, but there was another way, one that was most important in our lives. At that point one student answered, “prayer”. We then began a little discussion on how important it is to turn to God, especially at a time like this. At that point, one of the students (the one who had answered “texting”) asked, “If Jesus is always with us and loves us so much, then why did he send the Corona virus?” The buses were arriving so I explained to a 7 or 8 year old as best I could in a few moments how God is all good and He doesn’t send illness to us but that He is the answer to all that is bad.

I have thought a lot about that exchange over the last two days. The initial responses looked to the world around us rather than to Faith for the answer. We can try to dismiss that because they are children, but in reality their initial responses often mirror our own as adults. How often do we fail to turn to prayer, to bring to the feet of Jesus our concerns, to pray for those around us as well as for ourselves? At a time when the world around us is in turmoil and so many are filled with fear our response has to be centered in prayer: to pray for deliverance from this pandemic, to pray for all those who are ill, to pray for government officials, to pray for doctors and nurses, to pray for scientists looking to develop a vaccine, to pray for each other.

Perhaps some, most, or maybe even all of us struggle to pray at a time like this because we ask the same question as the one child, “why?” Great minds have struggled with the question of why in the face of evil, sickness, and suffering in this world. I don’t think we will ever have a completely satisfactory answer in this life. I am not a great mind, but in Faith I know that God is not the cause of this Pandemic but He can use this to draw us closer to Him. We can respond with fear, selfishness and a lack of concern for others or we can find strength in our Faith in a loving and merciful God and seek to respond to this crisis with Trust in Him, a spirit of generosity, and love for others. We can let this challenge bring out the worst in us or God to bring out the best.

We are all in this together; as difficult as it is, let us pray for each other that we will seek God's Grace to strengthen us so we may all respond in Faith.
Please be assured of my continued prayers.

In Christ,
Fr. Caruso