



Father Matt's Musings

March 17, 2020

Happy St. Patrick's Day

Do not let your hearts be troubled; Fear not; Do not be afraid. After love one another, do not be afraid is the next most often repeated command in the gospels. St. Francis de Sales says that after sin, anxiety is the next greatest evil. His point is that anxiety and fear rob us of this present moment because of undue worry about the future or too much sadness or dwelling on the past. The present moment is where we meet God and at this moment we are called to live.

It is difficult not to have fear or anxiety about the present moment with its uncertainties and the moment to moment changes that take place surrounding the Coronavirus. Our fears, anxieties, and uncertainties are understandable. After the crucifixion, we find the disciples in the upper room, behind locked doors, sad but also huddled and stymied by their fears. Jesus did not let them live in that condition. His first words to them were, "Peace be with you." They stayed in that upper room but more and more, Jesus gave them the courage to act even in the face of their fears. My prayer for us is that we have the same trust and courage in God's love, presence and peace.

In this uncertain climate, I ask us to consider a few things:

1. Please listen to the experts and the steps they are asking us to take. I know that they are restrictive, but let us look to the good and health of the whole community.
2. Please pray each day for one another and all affected by the virus. The consequences are far-reaching, and

- we need to be attentive to how we can help one another. We begin with prayer and move to action.
3. Social distancing in our OLGc community called to Live Jesus. Six feet distances, groups of ten or fewer can lead to a sense of isolation and even loneliness. Please reach out to neighbors, especially those who are alone and reassure others of our care and concern.
 4. Remain optimistic. Mark Twain wrote, "I have been through some terrible things in life, some of which actually happened." Peace and anxiety can coexist. It is up to us to try to choose peace. When life seems to be OOC (out of control), let us try to choose to be CCC (calm, cool and collected).

May the peace of Christ, the love of God and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you and reign in your hearts.

Live Jesus!

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