



OUR LADY of GOOD COUNSEL CATHOLIC CHURCH

Fr. Matt's Musings March 27, 2020

Hope - Hold On Pain Ends

Of the three theological virtues, hope is the least mentioned, at least in my homilies and messages. I want to address it today, not just because it accompanies faith and love in its importance, but also because of its essential nature to help us in these uncertain days.

1. **Hold.** Faith and love are daily virtues that have tangible expressions. Our daily prayers, our Scripture and spiritual readings and our sacraments are all expressions of our faith. Our daily sacrifices, upbuilding and life-giving words and selfless actions are all examples of our love. Hope seems to be more elusive and ethereal. It is future-oriented, so it is not always easy to see tangible expressions. It reminds us that we have limited control over our lives. Hope calls us to trust in God's plan and our part in that, even though we may not have as much understanding in that plan as we desire. These days have shown us examples of how we hold on to hope. Reaching out to neighbors, concerts at home by artists, posters saying Happy Birthday or Anniversary and drive-by horns honking are expressions of our need to look to the bigger picture of who we are and how we are called to be that well.
2. **On.** Hope endures. I often think of the artisans of the Middle Ages who worked on cathedrals and palaces and major projects, knowing that their work would contribute to the final project, but they would never see it to completion. We often plant seeds as teachers or as parents, mentors, coaches, etc. but do not always see the final results. Hope calls us to trust and to endure.
3. **Pain.** The present pain and suffering are real for so many: spiritually, economically, personally, physically, socially, but the care is equally present. The dedication of the doctors, nurses, teachers, and so many others all point to the bigger

picture that we are called to care for one another and look outside of ourselves to support others and give them signs that others care.

4. **Ends.** One of the less helpful parts of the current situation is that most of us grow up with fairy tales that have happily ever after endings. That is a fairy tale. Our Lenten and Easter seasons tell us that there are suffering and pain (Good Friday) but love and life are even stronger (Easter Sunday). That is the source of our hope. I conclude with a paraphrase from the Czech writer and former president, Vaclav Havel, who said that hope does not mean that everything works out in the end, but rather hope says that whatever we experience, no matter how difficult or painful, that life has meaning. Let us help one another find meaning and God in these days, especially through our deep faith, loving actions and enduring hope.

Live Jesus!

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All through love, nothing through force or fear.

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