



My Dear Parishioners,

Praised Be Jesus Christ! This week, we continue with the article by Sam Guzman: **Five Ways to Keep Faith in Difficult Times**. Hope you find this helpful. Prior to that, a few words:

- 1) We salute and remember all our veterans this week.
- 2) Thanks to all who helped with the Archbishop’s visit last week. He enjoyed his visit with us very much. Be on the lookout for an article about our parish on catholicphilly.com
- 3) Next week, we welcome back to the parish Phong Le who will be speaking at all the Masses in regards to the Seminary Appeal.
- 4) The end of our Jubilee Year is upon us with closing Mass slated for December 8 at 12 Noon. Be sure to get your tickets to our dinner/dance. This will be the final Jubilee Event of the year.

Prior to the close of our Jubilee Year, we begin a New Church Year on December 1<sup>st</sup>. For this New Year, our parish focus on a new theme: **Receiving and Giving the Love of God**. The symbol of which will be the Sacred Heart. To help us launch this, we will have a parish enthronement of Sacred Heart on the Feast of Christ the King. More info to come, but pray with me now for God’s grace in this New Year.

Peace,  
Fr. Rogers

SAM GUZMAN: 5 WAYS TO KEEP FAITH IN DIFFICULT TIMES. (PART II)

**2. Stay close to the Immaculate Virgin**

The Virgin Mary is the greatest of all saints—even the greatest and most marvelous of all creatures. She is the Mother of God and the mediatrix of all graces. To her, God has given the promise of crushing the serpent’s head. She is a real and living being who loves you, and who is powerful beyond imaging.

Stay close to her, then. Hide yourself under mantle. She will feed you with the milk of grace. She will defend you from all evil. She will lead you to the burning heart of her Son. No one who turns to her will be unaided.

In the words of the great St. Bernard:

*“In dangers, in doubts, in difficulties, think of Mary, call upon Mary. Let not her name depart from your lips, never suffer it to leave your heart. And that you may obtain the assistance of her prayer, neglect not to walk in her footsteps. With her for guide, you shall never go astray; while invoking her, you shall never lose heart; so long as she is in your mind, you are safe from deception; while she holds your hand, you cannot fall; under her protection you have nothing to fear; if she walks before you, you shall not grow weary; if she shows you favor, you shall reach the goal.”*

**3. Live Sacramentally**

In Tolkien’s *Lord of the Rings*, Frodo and Sam plunge into the darkness and evil of Mordor. The horror of this place is almost enough to overwhelm them completely. They are often weak and desperately thirsty. Yet, they are sustained daily, almost miraculously, by the Elven loaves of bread they were given in Rivendell. While it is tasteless, it gives them a strength well beyond that of ordinary food.

There is no question that Tolkien was giving us an image of the sustaining power of the Eucharist. Indeed, Tolkien deeply loved the Eucharist and recommended it be received daily. Here is what he wrote in a letter:

***Out of the darkness of my life, so much frustrated, I put before you the one great thing to love on earth: the Blessed Sacrament. . . . There you will find romance, glory, honour, fidelity, and the true way of all your loves on earth...***

The only cure for sagging or fainting faith is Communion. Though always itself, perfect and complete and inviolate, the Blessed Sacrament does not operate completely and once for all in any of us. Like the act of Faith it must be continuous and grow by exercise.

Frequency is of the highest effect. Seven times a week is more nourishing than seven times at intervals.”

To survive this storm in the Church and in the world, we must, like Tolkien recommends, find strength in the sacraments. Especially, we should receive frequently the Eucharist and go to confession.

But if you are married, you should realize that this, too, is a powerful sacrament. Cardinal Raymond Burke went so far as to say, “There is no greater force against evil in the world than the love of a man and woman in marriage. After the Holy Eucharist, it has a power beyond anything that we can imagine.” Let us draw strength from these powerful means of grace we have been given.