



My Dear Parishioners,

Praised Be Jesus Christ! On this first weekend of November when we "Fall Back" to Eastern Standard Time, just about the only thing that we gain is an extra hour. Beginning this week, light and leaves and will be less as will be the green land and lawns. The Irish poet, Hopkins called this time of year **Martinmas time** and while he used that to refer to November, it seems to me an apt description not just for this month, but the time in which we are living.

It should be clear to all that we are living in historic, changing and disturbing times. While not the first to live in times like this, you and I have not lived in times like this before. As the slang **YOLO** is right. **You Only Live Once**. And such is our times to live! For some reason, you and I have been called to live in this **now** time which is cloudy, confusing and very concerning. Great books have been written recently, about HOW to live in these times. Our own Archbishop penned a book on the topic. And such books can be helpful. (I'd be happy to recommend a list, if you'd like.) But our lives do not play themselves out in books, TV or podcasts of our favorite commentator. Our lives play themselves out in the 24 hour day that we have; in the relationships that we keep and in the decisions that we make. And for that reason, what we do, how we live and how we spend the hours we have in these times is of utmost importance.

Last week, I came across an article that helped me and I'd like to un-pack it for you here over the next few weeks. The title is **Be Not Afraid: 5 Ways to Have Hope in Dark Times**. It was written by a gentleman named Sam Guzman. I pray that these 5 ways may be a light for all of us as we press-on in this dark time.

Peace,
Fr. Rogers

Among Catholics who love our Lord Jesus, there is a great deal of interior suffering and perplexity of late. The reason is no mystery. The forces of evil have been unleashed on the world, and the spirit of wickedness, the spirit of anti-Christ, grows ever stronger, like the thick, black clouds of a threatening storm devouring the horizon.

Worse still, from this storm there seems to be no safe haven. For even our beloved Church has been infected by the spirit of the age. Confusion and dissension reign within her once sheltering walls. Catholics viciously attack one another with acid rhetoric. Shepherds who should guide and protect us abandon their flock in favor of political platitudes and corrupt cronyism. Priests who should be ministers of grace are mired in moral debauchery, luxury, or at the very least, lukewarm tepidity. Even good men who do care lose their courage and refuse to speak on behalf of truth.

Faced with such looming darkness, the greatest temptation of all is despair and faithlessness. The devil whispers in our ear that it doesn't matter, the Church has failed, that it is all a lie. The easiest thing in the world would be to believe it—to surrender to doubt and lapse into impotent anger and unbelief. And yet we must resist this temptation with all our might. We must not be like St. Peter, who out of fear, confusion, and uncertainty denied our Lord three times. The greater the time of trial, the greater the grace poured out.

I am firmly convinced that in these times, the merest stammering of the creed, the weakest but most heartfelt act of faith, despite all feelings to the contrary, will be rewarded with a crown of martyrdom. For we *must* be martyrs, for martyr means witness. When all that felt certain is crumbling around us, we must bear witness to the faith we hold. **Here are five simple ways to keep the faith in difficult times.**

1. Nourish Your Interior Life

Those who will survive this current crisis will not necessarily be those with encyclopedic knowledge of theological minutiae. They will rather be those with a deep soul life. Those who know Jesus Christ at an intimate level and who love him with every beat of their heart. Nurture, then, your interior life. Pray (especially the rosary). Meditate. Cultivate interior silence. Constantly pray the psalms, those great and mighty testaments to grace in times of darkness as well as times of victory. Repeat acts of faith, hope, and love. Immerse yourself in spiritual reading. Spend time in Eucharistic adoration. Seek to really *know* our Lord in a more than intellectual way. Open your heart to him and ask for interior knowledge of his care and presence. He will not leave such a prayer unanswered. Ask and it will be given to you. Knock and the door will be opened. Seek, and you will find.

PEWS AVAILABLE

Part of our Church renovation project included the renovation of our choir loft. This week, new pew- benches for use by our choir will be delivered. Old pews which had been up on the loft are now available if anyone would like them for your home. Unlike the pews on the main floor of our Church, these pews are more and come in 5 foot or 8 foot length. If interested for your home, please call the parish office.