

October 14, 2018: Finding Peace in Our Anxious Times

Dear Parishioners,

The news and politics of our day can fill us with anxiety. One of my nephews told one of my sisters to take a sabbatical from the news because it was causing her so much anxiety. As we head into the mid-term elections the tension, polarization, anger and anxiety will intensify. And of course the Church has been shaken and tried again with the revelations of sexual abuse by priests and bishops. In the midst of all this anxiety, where do we find peace? Some October saints and the Rosary show us the way to peace.

St. Teresa of Avila (feast day Oct. 15th) and St. Therese of Lisieux (feast day Oct. 1st) also lived in troubled and trying times. Teresa of Avila, who lived in the 16th Century, saw the Church being quite literally torn apart by the Protestant Reformation. She, and John of the Cross, who was imprisoned and tortured by his own religious community, were attempting a reform of the Carmelite Order that had become corrupt and lax. Therese of Lisieux, in late 19th century France, also lived through political turmoil and an aggressive secularism that was attacking and questioning the Church. Both of these women found their peace and solace in prayer, in a union and communion with Our Lord Jesus that transcended the turmoil that went on around them either in the Church or world.

As the Book of Ecclesiastes relates, “There is nothing new under the sun”. The same dramas and turmoil get played out in every age; a different stage and actors, but the same drama, the drama of light and darkness, of good and evil. Our peace comes from knowing and trusting that Jesus has conquered the world and all darkness, and that in the end His Kingdom, a kingdom of goodness, justice, peace, truth and light will prevail. Trusting in Jesus does not remove the problems and sufferings of life, but it does bring peace, because in Christ we believe that Jesus suffers with us and in the end all will be well for those who love him.

The Rosary is a great tool to bring about peace in our souls. The Rosary has a simplicity and childlike quality about it that the “sophisticated” have shunned. It is no wonder Our Lady appears to the “little” and to children, like the children at Fatima and Bernadette at Lourdes. The Rosary sets aside a place and space in our souls whereby exposure to Jesus’ presence in the mysteries. Mary’s motherly love cannot help but bring about peace in our soul. Meditating on the mysteries of Christ’s life can take our minds off present anxiety and distractions, and bring us to a place of greater perspective and peace.

On the last Sunday of September I recommended and challenged everyone to pray the Rosary, or at least a part of it, throughout the month of October, to pray for the renewal of our Church and the renewal of our parish. By God’s providence our Catholic community in Edmonds has been given the name of “Holy Rosary” now for over a hundred years. It would be unwise of us not to take advantage of this wonderful gift, a way to prayer and peace.

In Christ,

Father Vincent