

From the Desk of Our Pastor ...

Being Alone



It is simply not good being alone. True, Jesus often “went out alone” to pray, especially during the night hours after a long day of ministry. Certainly, we must develop the strength of character to “be alone” in solitude and silence as a spiritual discipline, for as I have said before, if you are lonely when you are by yourself, you are in bad company. But this pandemic has forced many of us into an isolation unprecedented, and we can see some negative effects of being alone that we need to address.

First, we see that God himself said in the beginning that it is “not good for man to be alone.” This even prompted Saint John Paul II to say that “God is not enough” for us. Adam without Eve had plenty of animals around him on one hand, and a vital relationship to his Creator on the other hand, not to mention angelic beings. But something was not right. God therefore created Eve and by extension, other human beings, to complete Adam. What an amazing insight into God’s generosity, that He does not smother us up completely in His immensity but gives us room and freedom to connect vitally with others. He knows that we need more than just Him!

Moreover, He has wired us to receive grace from other people, even though this grace originally comes from Him, the fountain of all goodness. Our faith must not be a “lonely faith.” If we are cut off from people, we are cut off from grace. It takes a certain humility to grasp this. We cannot do this thing call life, especially the Christian life, apart from others and the grace they bestow upon us, sometimes by just being together, even merely seeing love and joy dancing in the eyes. Other Catholics of deep and genuine faith are our lifeline to salvation.

Finally, we must not be “anonymous Catholics.” It is fashionable today to keep our faith to ourselves “out of respect” for others who have a right to their own beliefs. While we respect this right, we vehemently disagree that being private about our faith does anyone any good. It does us no good, because it is directly contrary to our Lord’s command that we be missionary disciples. If we do not openly and freely share our faith, we can be sure that our faith is either dead or dying. Being an anonymous Catholic does those around us no good because they cannot benefit from the authentic joy of hearing your words describing your story, your authentic encounter with Jesus. To be an anonymous Catholic is to be alone.

So, let us come to grips with the fact that we need others and others need us, especially in this time. This Lent go out of your way to connect with others who can energize you with their faith. Moreover, break out of your anonymity! There is someone somewhere who needs to know that you are a Catholic!

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Pastor