

THE PASTOR'S POST

OLQA

Dear Parish Family:

This past week, I met with a former student of mine from my previous parish. He was a student in the school when I was the principal and when I taught sixth grade religion there. It was nice to re-connect with him and his mom. He had great memories of his experiences of the school and spoke about the impact the Catholic school had made on him. He attends a public high school, in large part, because of the distance.

He spoke about the various prayer services we had and he even remembered the May Crowning where all of the kids in the school would come celebrate and ask for the help of the Blessed Virgin Mary. It was a long standing tradition in the Catholic school as it is in our parish and in our school. (We'll celebrate our May Crowning this week!) It was a great feeling to see the impact the Catholic school had on him - as St Brigid/Our Lady of Hope does on so many kids.

The reading for some Marian feasts is the first reading for today. And it is one that has helped me in my own relationship with Mary. The reading takes place after the Ascension and I always imagine these Apostles and disciples just not being sure what to do. Probably uncertain. Confused. They're supposed to be witnesses. How do they do that? So they come together to pray...and Mary is with them. In this passage when I pray with it, I imagine keeping everyone calm. I can picture her reassuring them that Jesus is still with them and will provide all they need!

In this month of May, perhaps this is a good image for us to pray with. For we know those moments when we are sort of stuck, no? Maybe a big decision is upon us and we're not sure where God is calling us. Perhaps we are overwhelmed by the realities of the world in which we live. Maybe it is some struggle with a member of our family, our community? Perhaps a little bit of each are part of what is keeping you locked away or withdrawn.

Maybe from this place, we can, like the Apostles, turn to Mary, devoted in prayer.

Here, too, the devotion to Mary offers many ways to be in accord with prayer with her, who always leads us to her Son. This month of May might be a good time to commit to a certain Marian prayer in the life of the Church. There is the *Little Office of the Blessed Virgin Mary* that might link beautifully for those who pray the Liturgy of the Hours. (These were a big part of Dorothy Day's spiritual journey.). If you don't pray the Rosary, can you consider praying a decade a day each day of May and perhaps beyond. We have put the Litany of Loreto on the stairs of our school and have prayer cards by the Our Lady of Grace statue in the Church. Maybe this is not a bad prayer to consider. Or can you just commit to pray one Hail Mary for someone you know who is in need? These are all ways that bring us to be more "in accord to prayer" to the Lord, with Mary's help and support.

With Mary's help, we are more likely to be able to handle some of the challenges and struggles of this life journey and, Lord knows, there are slew of them. This is true for the other readings we pray with today. In the times of darkness (our psalm) and sufferings (second reading), and times of uncertainty (first reading), maybe trying to reach out to Mary more and more who knows that struggle of our uncertainty but trusted again and again in God's will, God's plan for her.



Nine years ago, in May of 2017, there was a tremendous fire in the church of my last parish. The entire interior of the Church was destroyed and it took a long time to rebuild and restore. When we were preparing to reopen the Church, we wanted to include a new statue related to the school because it was a part of the difficult day of the fire as well as the restoration of the Church. So we put in a statue of the patroness of the school - Our Lady Queen of the Apostles (OLQA).

Please pray for me. I promise the same.

Featherman