

Sisters and Brothers, may we dwell in His Peace.

01/31/2021

### Covenant Life

- We are continuing to discern when it will be safe to hold another in-person Community Gathering. Please join us in praying not only for an end of the virus and those affected but also for wisdom and discernment for the Coordinators.
- Your ongoing financial support is sincerely appreciated. Please donate online [here](#) or mail your donations to P.O. Box 225008 Dallas, Tx 75222

**Reflection** - In the opening line of the second reading today Paul states "*I should like you to be free of anxieties (1 Cor 7:32).*" As I reflected on these words, that seem particularly relevant to us at this time, I could not help but recall the chapter I had just read from Jacques Philippe's book "The Eight Doors of the Kingdom". My men's group is reading and discussing it and if you have not read the book, I highly recommend it. The current chapter covered the beatitude of Peace. Fr. Jacques does a masterful job of focusing on the need for inner peace...more in a moment.

Every day we are bombarded with attacks that would disrupt our peace. We are thrust into situations and also might be listening to a lot of talking heads in the media that can create much anxiety. But Paul's words challenge us to be free of anxiety. In his letter to the Philippians (4:6-7) Paul exhorts: "*Have no anxiety at all, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, make your requests known to God. Then the peace of God that surpasses all understanding will guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus.*"

There is no question that this is a high anxiety time. Simply put the virus has stressed every aspect of our lives. What Paul, however, encourages us to do is to make our requests known to our Heavenly Father and welcome His gift of peace. This is not easy, even during normal times, but we know with the power of His Spirit we can set aside fear and focus on being graceful, gracious, and grateful. We must be mindful of the evil one who tries to disrupt our inner peace.

One of the practical ways that we can do this is to commit to start each day in His presence. If we start our day with Praise and Thanksgiving and reading His word and calling upon His gifts rather than checking our email or listening to opinionated talking heads we predisposition ourselves to His inner peace.

Jesus tells us to not be afraid. The old testament is packed with lessons of God showing His people that they need not fear anything on earth but only to trust Him. God's command to His people in Joshua 1:9 was "*Be strong and steadfast! Do not fear nor be dismayed, for the LORD, your God, is with you wherever you go.*" This is a promise we can stand on especially during a global pandemic.

Besides standing on God's promises we combat anxiety by building up our inner peace. Fr. Jacques reminds us that our inner peace does not come from outside ourselves but rather '*from our communion in faith and love with Jesus, the Prince of Peace.*' We build it up by '*putting ourselves in God's hands in fervent prayer, making acts of faith and hope, and meditating on scripture passages that invite one to trust.*'

We are all called to witness but '*we cannot transmit peace unless we have it in our hearts.*' If we are not at peace, we '*will be vulnerable to the force of division and all the cycles of fear and violence that trouble the world.*'

Let us therefore do the best thing we can, for ourselves and those we are called to witness to, by building our own inner peace, dismissing any anxiety, along with being strong and steadfast.

Let us pray "*Heavenly Father, I repent if I have spread any feelings of anxiety or fear. I understand these feelings and do not want to be subject to them. I want to stand on Your Word and Your Promises. I commit to spending time with You every morning, to place myself into Your presence, to praise You, to read Your Word, to meditate on Your Word, and to conform my life to Yours. I surrender to You. Give me Your Holy Spirit today in a new and fresh way. Amen.*"

God bless,  
David