

# A Word From Fr. Tom Niehaus

February 9, 2020

## Light and Darkness

The readings for Mass this weekend point out to us the theme of light and darkness. The prophet Isaiah records that the Lord encourages taking care of the poor, calling upon Him in prayer, reforming our speech and helping those in dire need and then, “light shall rise for you in the darkness, and the gloom shall become for you like midday (Isaiah 58:10).” This theme is echoed in the responsorial psalm as we chant, “The just man is a light in darkness to the upright (Psalm 112:4-5).” This scripture identifies the one who is kind, generous and just on behalf of the Lord will be remembered forever in eternity receiving the reward of glory. It is ultimately for the holy person to have the light of God shine through the darkness of fear, injustice and poverty. Fidelity to God leads to the trusting soul being bathed in the light of God in all that they undertake. St. Paul in this week’s Epistle explains how despite weakness and fear the Lord was able to reveal through his words and preaching a light of Divine Wisdom, that transformed the minds and hearts of many people to embrace the faith in Jesus Christ (1 Corinthians 2:1-5).” Jesus says to all of us, “Your light must shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your heavenly Father (Matthew 5:13-16).” The light of God’s love dispels the darkness of fear, sin and isolation. Through our faith in Jesus Christ we can find ourselves bathed in the heavenly light of consolation and peace, resting secure in confidence that we will be forgiven of our sins and found in the midst of the Communion of Saints. When our lives have been touched by the light of God through conversion of life, turning away from sin, growing in our desire to spend time with Jesus in daily prayer, taking time to read scripture, going to Eucharistic Adoration, serving the poor, visiting the elderly in our care facilities, writing a note of support to someone who needs a boost and so many other ways...there will be a natural movement in our hearts to want to share the light we have received from God with others. Take some time this week to notice where the light of God has shown upon your life. Give thanks. Take some time to notice the people around you who could benefit from you sharing the light of God with them. Go and share the light of God with someone who needs it!

## World Day of the Sick

February 11, 2020 is remembered as the World Day of the Sick. This special day was started by Pope St. John



Paul II in 1992 as a way for the faithful to pray for those suffering from diseases and illnesses and their caregivers. Traditionally this is also the Feast of Our Lady of Lourdes. Our Lady appeared 18 times to a young girl named Bernadette

Soubirious in Lourdes which is located on the banks of the Gave de Pau River in Southern France. It was here that Our Lady appeared under the title of the “Immaculate Conception” and in 1858 directed Bernadette to dig in the ground, from which sprung forth a stream of water which has seen thousands of healing miracles take place in the lives of people from all over the world ever since. As we pray for the sick and suffering on this day, it is also a day to pray for those who have been called in a special way to serve the needs of those afflicted with diseases and illnesses. We remember the doctors, nurse practitioners, nurses, certified nursing assistants, aids, and other key staff who work in helping the sick in their time of need. We are grateful for those who help us when we have health issues.

## Silent Retreat

Every year Catholic Church Law requires that each priest take a spiritual retreat. I will be away on silent retreat from February 3 – 10 with members of the Companions of Christ. The Companions of Christ is a group of diocesan priests living in community who serve the local church as the bishop assigns them, while following more closely to the vows of poverty, obedience and celibacy. Please pray for the 3 priests on retreat Fr. Marc Peveglio, Fr. Marcus Milles and myself. The retreat will take place in Alabama by EWTN headquarters. I will be back in the parish on February 11th to resume regular parish activities. In my absence Fr. Eugene Theisen from New Prague and Fr. James Stiles from Le Center will be available to help with emergency anointing of the sick or funerals.

With prayers and love.

Fr. Tom Niehaus