



MORNING PRAYER DEVOTIONAL

THURSDAY, MARCH 19, 2020

Readings: Exodus 26:1-10, 15-16, 29-37; Matthew 24:1-28; Psalm 45

And because lawlessness will be increased, the love of many will grow cold. But the one who endures to the end will be saved”

Matthew 24:12-13

The above quote comes in the middle of Jesus’ dark and foreboding description of the “Last Days.” This apocalyptic description provides guidance for all of us in times of severe trial, like what we are experiencing together in these days. While we can become fascinated with the various details of Jesus’ description, I think the heart of the matter pertains to our love, that it not “grow cold.”

We are seeking to “be church” electronically these days. Fr. Joe and I are putting out daily devotions and we will be offering Sunday videos for you to observe the Lord’s Day and to keep covenant with God and with one another. We pray these offerings (and others) will sustain and encourage you. In a word, we pray it will aid in preventing your love for God and one another from growing cold.

I invite you to look at it another way: here is an opportunity for us to re-commit to one another out of love for Christ. We can affirm our love and care for one another, check up on each other and support one another in prayer. It is also a time for reflection, prayer and fasting (something appropriate for Lent). Some of us will have a bit more time to ourselves: time to read and study, to pray, to enjoy a little extra time with family, to do a few of those forgotten chores around the house and yard, and to take a few moments to make that phone call or send that e-mail, just to say, “I’m thinking of you.”



A very famous study at Princeton many years ago revealed that time is a moral category. People who are stressed and in a hurry do not engage with the needs of others as much as people who feel they have a bit more time on their hands. May God give us grace to see this season as a time to invite more caring, more concern, more prayer, more love into our daily lives.

While we are offering electronic means of connecting with one another, let’s remember it is a *compromise*, not a *convenience*. There is nothing that fully takes the place of face-to-face interaction. While I am grateful for all of the modern technology that keeps us in touch with one another, the heart of true love comes through the incarnation – through being there in the flesh. **Remember: God did not love the world so much that He sent a text. He sent His Son.**

Paul’s words to the Thessalonians become very germane: “But since we were torn away from you, brothers, for a short time, in person not in heart, we endeavor the more eagerly and with great desire to see you face to face...” (1 Thessalonians 2:17). Let us pray for the day when we can gather face to face once more. In the meantime, let us persevere, praying for grace, that our love does not grow cold.

– Fr. Marc