

Message From Our State Chaplain

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VIVAT JESUS!

My brother Knights,

This motto of our order has been at the fore of my mind in light of our current situation. In times of uncertainty--which we are certainly in now--I typically find that returning to the fundamentals gives me hope and peace. Especially given the news from our governor today, it seems that the uncertainty and strangeness of our situation will continue for at least the next three weeks.

But this is precisely why we should return to that foundation of our faith and our order. It is because Jesus lives that we have any hope at all. It is because Jesus lives that we have confidence that all trials give way to blessing. It is because Jesus lives that our sufferings have value and meaning. It is because Jesus lives that God works all things for our good. It is because Jesus lives that our faith is not in vain, but elevates us into glory.

And right there, in the life of Jesus, we find out the measure and meaning of our own lives. As God our Father provides for the needs of His Son, so He does for us. As situations and circumstances change, God remains the same. This means that the abundance of grace and blessing that He has in store for you is still available. His graces will look different than what we are used to, but this makes sense because our current situation is different than we are used to. The grace is given to be used, to take root, and bear fruit in our lives, even now.

Knights, the time is now here to take up our motto, not as a nice platitude to begin our meetings, speeches, and conferences, but as an actual way of life. *Vivat Jesus* must be the mark of our whole lives--Jesus lives! This is the core of everything that it means to be a Knight of Columbus. This is the core of everything that it means to be Catholic. This is what it means to be joined to the Body of Christ, which is a living reality.

While we should act in prudence and obedience to just and right rules, we do not have to let fear dominate our lives. Jesus lives! Be creative in your efforts to serve your family or neighbors, even if you cannot be with them in the flesh. Speak with kindness and compassion in the virtual arena, a place where kindness and compassion are usually in want. Spend time in the quiet place of prayer with Jesus, come to know Him in those deeper places of your heart. To do this is to live from that place of faith, that place of *vivat Jesus*.

My brothers, times of trial are times where the Lord shines the brightest on His Church. Especially coming out of the isolation (whenever that may be), we will be the ones to put things back together. It is on us, when all is said and done, to bring the life of Christ to the world around us. This has not changed. This will not change. Let us live that now, that we may share it with all those around us.

I want to leave you with a few words from St. Theresa of Avila. I have returned to these words in many seasons of struggle, and I hope that you find comfort and solace in them.

"Let nothing disturb you. Let nothing frighten you. All things are passing away."

*God never changes. Patience obtains all things. Whoever has God lacks nothing;
God alone suffices."*

May the peace and blessings of God, who is the Way, the Truth, and the Life, be yours in these trying times. May the life of Christ bring you an abundance of riches in mind and heart. May you *vivat Jesus* ring out through these days by the way you choose to live. And may you be safe and protected by His mighty hand.

Your Chaplain, Fr. Paul Erickson