



Church of the Holy Family  
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## Message for the 12<sup>th</sup> Ordinary Sunday, Year A, 2020

Dear Parishioners of the Church of the Holy Family

Positive developments have arrived for we just have welcomed Phase 2 of the easing of the containment Measures. Let us praise God for He has heard our prayers. The authorities have called Phase 2 a process to Phase 3 which means that there would be refinements and more broad-based easing along the way although U-turns cannot be ruled out

Situations in China, South Korea and Japan have shown multiple flare-ups coming from unexpected sources are real, fast and furious. Phase 2 would take longer than the 30-day Phase 1 which was eventually shortened by one-third and this depends on improvements in the infection rates even as we are more exposed.

We have opened the Church for limited numbers of persons for short period of personal private quiet devotion to thank God for his care and concern during this Pandemic. You shall hear from us soon as possible on further developments.

The Readings of this Sunday direct our attention to the reality of evil and is apt in the context of our struggles against the grave effects of the COVID-19 which is an evil not just for its immediate and deadly pathogenic effects but also, the broader Public Health Crisis which precipitated many other crises both economic and social.

The 1<sup>st</sup> Reading invites to view the human trials and tribulation in the person of Prophet Jeremiah who remembers to cry out to God as his first recourse that some of his fellow Jews are doing him evil acts for they are conspiring to destroy him for what he has done in the name of God. He experienced resistance, persecution and betrayal. He appeals for protection from God and the Responsorial Psalm echoes his and our thirst for God's assurances, *In your great love, answer me, O God.*

The 2<sup>nd</sup> Reading links the process of the downward spiral of Sin leading to spiritual Death. Yet, the gift of our Saviour Jesus Christ overcome Death and this gift is freely available at all times and in abundance.

The Gospel text reminds us that there is another type of evil that can kill the soul. The source of which is the Evil One, the Devil called Satan in the Bible. Yet, Jesus at the start of the passage tells us, *Do not be afraid* and at the conclusion, He exhorts us turn to God always giving us the examples of a fallen sparrow and every hair on our heads that God is in the know of what is happening to us right now.

In Theodicy which is simply the study of the presence of evil and God's response to it, there three broad categories of evil namely Physical Evil, Moral Evil and Spiritual Evil. Evil is defined the privation of Good ie any acts or effects that goes against the Good ie all those created by God the fullness of Good, Truth and Beauty. In the Book of Genesis, 'God created ... and it is good', occurring a few times in the 1<sup>st</sup> Chapter.

Physical Evil briefly refers to evil in the physical, material world such as natural disasters eg floods, droughts, typhoons, tsunamis, diseases including the current Pandemic, volcanic eruptions, climate change etc.

Moral Evil briefly refers to evil acts committed by human beings. It includes offences against the Ten Commandments, Crimes against Humanity such as War Crimes, Crimes against the Environment eg pollution, deforestation etc; basically imputable by civil or religious authorities. No doubt, moral acts can be a source of physical evil or spiritual evil and/or occur in parallel to the two Evils.

Also included would be situations influenced by human activities directly or indirectly such as plants and animals become extinct due loss of habitats; social inequalities due to imbalance in human progress resulting in formation of vulnerable groups etc. It hard to attribute such problems to any single individual or groups of people.

Spiritual Evil briefly refers to all acts directed against God, His Will, Plans and His agents. This Evil is attributed to the Devil and those on their own volition cooperated the Evil One.

*Do Not be Afraid!* The 2<sup>nd</sup> Reading and the Gospel gave us an authoritative assurance that we have Jesus Christ who suffered the cruelest of Moral Evil and Death but yet rise again and wants to gives us the grace continuously in our struggles to overcome Evil and in our battles to combat all forms of evils and injustice.

One prayer that we can use to help us to work together with God and all good people is:

Grant, O Lord, that we may always revere and love your Holy Name, for you never deprive of your guidance those you set firm on the foundation of your love. Deliver us and our souls from the hands of evil persons. Amen.

Owing to pressure of time, the Saints of the Day shall be given next week.

Happy Father's Day to all fathers.

Fr Stanislaus PANG