



# A REASON FOR OUR HOPE

*Angie Windnagle*

When I was little, I came home from school one day after a lively lesson on saying yes to God in our lives and declared, "If Jesus were to come today and ask me to go with him, I would say yes and go right away!" My mother was rightfully cautious and explained that if anyone claiming to be Jesus wanted to take me, I should come ask her first. As a child, I was let down that she wasn't as excited to say yes to Jesus as I was. As an adult, I can laugh and appreciate her response. She knew I could easily be deceived and the likelihood of Jesus coming to me in person was pretty low.

In the Gospel we hear Jesus say to us, "*I will not leave you orphans, I will come to you...*" It is so striking to me that this gospel is being read during our current times. During a time of confusion, suffering, uncertainty, and for many isolation and loneliness, God the Father is actively caring for us and telling each of us, *you are not alone*. The language of orphans and hope finds its answer in God's plan for humanity when Jesus says, "*I am in my Father, and you are in me, and I in you.*" Despite all the failings of human history and our own failings,



we are called to truly become part of God's family as His children through Baptism. We are called to be able to emphatically say yes to God as his children, no matter where it takes us.

The disciples knew this well and lived it boldly as we see in the first reading. The Holy Spirit enabled them to rise above worldly sufferings and persecutions and work miracles in Christ's name. In many ways, their courage is tied to their hope. St. Augustine once said that, "*hope has two daughters, anger and courage; anger at the way things are, and courage to see that they do not remain the same.*" The boldness of the disciples came from the love of the Holy Spirit that Jesus promised to give us all. The same Holy Spirit received at Confirmation. To be people of hope, we are called to be people of love and courage. I'm reminded of this when I read St. Peter's letter in the second reading. We may not see Jesus face to face as I was expecting as a child, but we do experience his voice and truth through the Church he founded. St. Peter encourages the faithful to be ready to give an explanation to those who ask for a reason for this hope. We ought to be always ready, in love and gentleness, to proclaim the gospel, even if it is difficult. It helps us ask the question: Am I living a life rooted in hope to the point that I can declare boldly like a child that God is for us and not against us?

In a real way, we have the unique opportunity to be online disciples in our world today with so many facets of society moved to digital platforms. God may not send us His Spirit to raise the dead as He did with the early Church, and we may not experience persecution, but He is calling us to raise souls from the brink of despair by our words and presence today. We are marked as members of a divine family and no longer tied to this earth. He has promised we won't be left orphans and has sent the Advocate to give us the strength to live in the hope of this promise. What will we do with it? Will those we interact with online, even in the small hidden ways, see this witness? Will they notice something different about us? The answers to our most profound questions about our situation have already been answered in the love of Christ. This saving love is the hope we are called to embody and share with the world. Let us do it boldly, and with the hope and trust of true children of God.

St Mary's  
Parish

Serving  
the  
Community

Serving  
the  
Family

Serving  
the  
City

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## PRAYER

O love eternal, my soul needs and chooses you eternally!

Ah, come Holy Spirit, and inflame our hearts with your love!

To love – or to die! To die – and to love!

To die to all other love in order to live in Jesus' love, so that we may not die eternally.

But that we may live in your eternal love,

O Savior of our souls, we eternally sing,

Live, Jesus! Jesus, I love! Live, Jesus, whom I love!

Jesus, I love, Jesus who lives and reigns forever and ever.

Amen.

-Prayer of St. Francis de Sales

## Morning Poem

Every morning  
the world  
is created.  
Under the orange

sticks of the sun  
the heaped  
ashes of the night  
turn into leaves again

and fasten themselves to the high branches ---  
and the ponds appear  
like black cloth  
on which are painted islands

of summer lilies.  
If it is your nature  
to be happy  
you will swim away along the soft trails

for hours, your imagination  
alighting everywhere.  
And if your spirit  
carries within it

the thorn  
that is heavier than lead ---  
if it's all you can do  
to keep on trudging ---

there is still  
somewhere deep within you  
a beast shouting that the earth  
is exactly what it wanted ---

each pond with its blazing lilies  
is a prayer heard and answered  
lavishly,  
every morning,


whether or not  
you have ever dared to be happy,  
whether or not  
you have ever dared to pray.

from *Dream Work* (1986) by Mary Oliver  
© Mary Oliver

## Assuring the Upkeep of Our Parish

Like any, family, body, or institution, the Church in its ministry and mission has always needed an income in order to allow the local community to live and to maintain an

Since collection are not possible in the present situation, the Parish Pastoral Council finance section has been working on a system for our webpage to allow donations to be made to all of the usual collections in this way. This is to be found on the top right hand corner of the website where you will find the access button to the page. From there, please follow the instructions. We know we can continue to count on your generosity.

Next week  our Finance Committee will be sending out a letter to parishioners regarding the one going financing of our parish.

***We apologise for apparent glitches in the Easypay system which we became aware of this week. WE are working to rectify these problems and to try to make the system function more efficiently and easily.***

THANK YOU

FOR YOUR CONTINUING SUPPORT AND GENEROSITY

## Archbishop's Advice on Opening of Churches:

At the moment the Government Road-map indicates that the opening of Churches and places of worship is foreseen for mid-July. Like all other measures, it is possible that if the public health situation permits it, these dates could be brought forward. It is important for the Church to give the message that we are enthusiastically preparing for the opening of all our Churches and the resumption of public Masses.

Many Churches remain open for private prayer where strict precautions are in operation. Churches are also open for funerals, baptisms and weddings in very limited numbers. Attendance at funerals is currently strictly limited to 10 people.

I suggest that Churches begin already preparing a detailed plan for full re-opening of Churches. Markers could be laid on benches and on floors to facilitate social distancing, remembering that the two metre distance applies not just to those beside you, but also those in front and behind you. A written plan should be developed regarding hand hygiene for larger numbers and for adequate cleansing of Churches.

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