

“We Need Our Church Back”

A Priest’s Spiritual Combat for Coronavirus Pandemic

Fr. Kyle Walterscheid

Selfishly, I want our church doors reopened and our church activities back to normal. I want that not just for us, but for all churches throughout the whole world.

And I suppose you do too.

But things are different now.

We have some self-imposed stay-at-home measures to our daily life and access to our churches is limited. So, let us pull back a bit and reflect on how God still calls us to Himself and what he calls us to do.

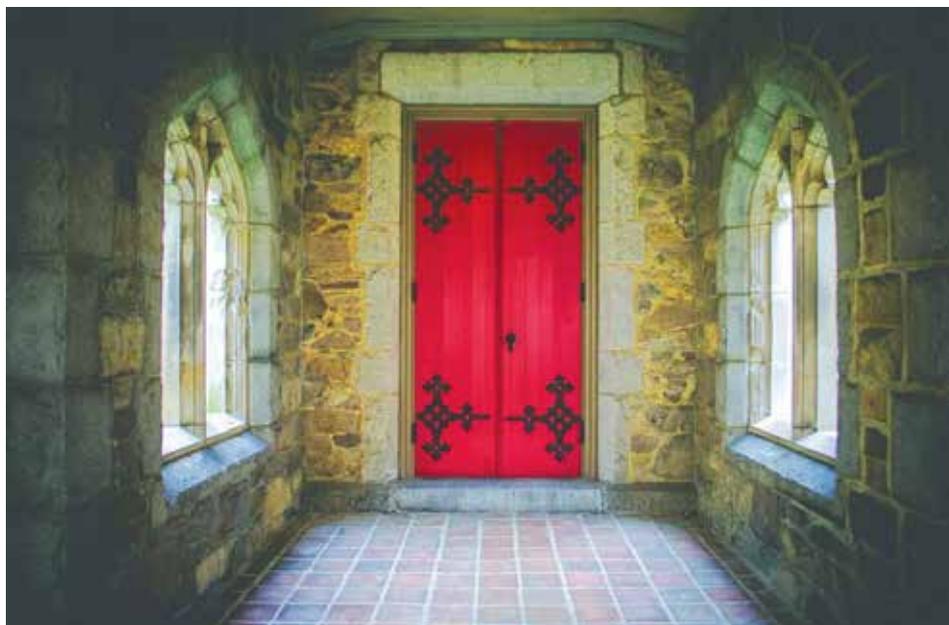
First, I want to share with you a true story of hope where God delivered part of northern Texas from a similar dire situation just a few years back.

From 2011-2014, a severe drought and famine hit the entire mid-southwest, but the Wichita Falls, Texas region was hit the worst. Dallas/Fort Worth was put under extreme water rations, but Wichita Falls had all but ran out of water and businesses were permanently closing left and right. Even if a rainfall brought some relief, it would not be enough to convince people to keep their doors open. It was devastating for the entire region.

For some reason, God put it on my heart to monitor their situation for over two years as it caught the daily news cycle. So, I earnestly prayed with them throughout that time.

All our prayers seemed unanswered.

I knew in the Gospel of Mark that Jesus said that in the worst cases



our prayers will require the personal sacrifice of both prayer and fasting, so I did that too, doing a 40-day fast.

A few weeks after the fast, God gave me a little insight about a future rain that was to come. Like in the days of Elijah, it had been 3.5 years of a severe drought.

During Spring Break of 2015, I was invited to St. Mary’s Catholic Church in Windthorst, Texas just 30 miles south of Wichita Falls, where the high school students gathered for their weekly Mass, meal, and youth activities.

There, during Mass, I shared with them the following: “What if I was to share with you that by this time next year this drought will not only end, but that every lake in the region would be completely filled and all our worries would be over?”

Just the thought of it brought joy to them. Then I added, “It will happen, God has heard your prayers.”

That spring brought about the largest rainfall ever recorded in the Wichita Falls area going back 150 years and all the lakes were filled and running over.

I share that story, first because it truly was a miracle from God. Secondly, because it happened in the last 10 years. Thirdly, because we are in a similar predicament – but this one involves the whole world.

Let us assume that God has permitted this virus.

On the other hand, Satan wants to use this virus to turn the world away from God, but Satan must also find a way to blame the Church for it. In God’s wisdom, all the churches appear to be closed, just as Satan had hoped and planned, but Satan does not have the last word, Jesus does.

While the church appears to be closed, many priests are still working and praying and fasting.

We work behind-the-scenes to give hope to the hopeless, praying and anointing the sick, and offering forgiveness to the repentant sinner in the name of Jesus.

At the same time, I ask that we all do something special. It will not be easy, but it is doable. It will require holiness, sacrifice and prayer.

We Need Our Church Back

No, I am not talking about simply opening the doors and going about things as normal. We need our Church back in a way that we haven't seen in 50 years.

We need families praying together.

We need Jesus Christ as the head of every household.

We need all of our families consecrated to the Sacred Heart of Jesus and to the Immaculate Heart of Mary.

We need to pray with the saints.

We need the protection of St. Michael the Archangel, and we need to entrust ourselves to our guardian angels.

We need a Church that is vibrant and leading the whole world to Jesus Christ and the glory of eternal life.

We need strong marriages – couples who pray together and sacrifice together for the greater glory of God and for the good of others.

We need to encourage our sons and daughters, grandsons and granddaughters to consider the religious life.

We need to be praying for our teenagers and young adults to come to believe that Jesus Christ is the one True Saviour of the world and help them discern their vocation in life. And when one of them says that they sense Jesus Christ calling them to consider the religious life, we should be elated and begin to pray and help them learn more about the religious life, encouraging them to seek what God wills for them.

For myself, there are untold families and peoples who prayed for me for seven years to make it through the seminary and I don't know if I would have persevered without all the graces God gave me through them.

No, we will not end this pandemic, but God may help us flatten the curve. And with certainty, we can get our lives back on the right track with Christ and his Church.

I ask everyone to do the following 4 things this week:

(1) Read one of the Gospels from beginning to end (Matthew, Mark, Luke, or John).

Really experience the Good News of Jesus Christ who conquered both sin and death.

(2) Pray for 30 minutes a day in addition to your scripture readings.

Bring everyone under your roof together to pray the rosary every day or the Divine Mercy Chaplet.

(3) This virus is the worst of the worst. Jesus said that this kind can only be taken out by prayer and fasting.

Include a daily fast this week. Enter into the passion of Jesus Christ and have passion for those suffering the most due to this pandemic. Suffer with those who suffer. Weep with those who weep.



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Can you go with three small meals each day without snacking? Can you do more? Please drink plenty of liquids. If you have health issues, then can you offer something else up as a sacrifice? Remember, we are all in this together and Jesus is in the boat with us.

(4) Lastly, pray for the Church, pray for our bishops, priests, and religious.

Pray for more young men and women to hear God calling them to the religious life; pray that they

may forgo what the world promises to embrace the eternal promise of Jesus Christ. Pray for our seminarians and those in religious formation.

Pray that our church be strong again and the greatest force of good in the world. Pray that our Church, as the bride of Christ, makes Christ present in all our families and in the whole world.

revealed: "Father forgiven them for they do not know what they do."

Jesus Christ will free us from this virus as he alone can do. Let us then be faithful servants of Jesus Christ as we turn away from all sin and cling to him and his Church knowing with certainty he will deliver us from all evil.



As Jesus was led to the cross his passion for every one of us was

"What a beautiful lesson of obedience is given to us in the divine Child of Nazareth. There is no evidence that He ever gave to Mary and Joseph just the nominal right to command, rather, the Scripture says He lived there in subjection to them.

Imagine, God subject to man – God, before whom the angels and principalities tremble, is subject to Mary and to Joseph. Here are two great miracles of humility and exaltation: the God-man obeying a woman, and a woman commanding the God-man, and that obedience lasted for thirty years.

By this long span of voluntary obedience, He revealed that the Fourth Commandment is the bedrock of family life.

In a larger way, how else could the primal sin of disobedience against God be undone except by the obedience in the flesh of the very God who was once defied. It was Lucifer who said, 'I will not obey,' and Eden caught up that echo."

Archbishop Fulton Sheen (The Bishop Sheen Catechism)



The Dominicans

*Truth is so Rare that
It's Delightful to Tell It!*



"The Gospel bears fruit whenever the community of believers hears and welcomes the Word of God in Truth and lives in Charity."

- Pope Benedict XVI

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