

December 23, 2018: Purification of the Church

Dear Parishioners and Guests,

This has been a difficult year for the Church with more revelations surrounding the priest abuse crisis and bishops complicit in the abuse, and a Cardinal who was an abuser himself. The Church has suffered a tremendous wound and lack of credibility, with many wondering whether the Church can be trusted. People are asking if the Church even has the ability to heal and renew itself?

Christmas, however, brings hope. Jesus has entered a fallen and broken world precisely to heal and save. Jesus is the light of the world. Christmas also brings the face of a woman, Mary. Mary is the first face we see the manger scene. She is close to Jesus. Does Mary have any relevance to the present Church crisis?

Mary brings the Divine Redeemer into the world by her obedient “yes.” She does so with an obedient faith which, as St. Augustine reminds us, first conceives the Word in her heart, and consequently in her womb. Much of the crisis today is centered around individuals who were disobedient and unfaithful to their vocations and to the teachings of the Church, especially in regard to sexual morality. Every Christian is called to be faithful to their given vocation whether it be celibate, married or single. Living out that vocation in a chaste manner means exercising sexual mastery or self-control in the service of love. We can see how living out a vocation in an unchaste manner actually hurts and abuses others.

The Church must be purified, all agree. The question is one of means.

What is the best way to remove this corruption, filth and evil within the Church? Mary offers us the model of purifying the Body of Christ with an uncompromising zeal for true purity and renewal of life. Mary has been cleansing the Body of Jesus since he was an infant. She does so with a maternal thoroughness, in a manner that does no harm, but rather builds up the body of Christ the Church. She will do the same, if invited, for her Son’s Mystical Body which in our age has become filthy.

Christian Holiness and renewal must now become the number one agenda item for the Church’s clergy and faithful alike.

Mary guides the way. As Spiritual Mother of all peoples, Mary sees everyone—bishop, priest, religious, layperson—as her little child in true need of the ongoing interior conversion, which alone can make the external living of the Gospel possible in our times. Our Lady, with a unique and personal maternal solicitude, encourages each of us, in the quiet of our hearts, toward a greater generosity of time in Adoration of her Eucharistic Son, in the praying of her Rosary, in the reception of the Sacraments,—and in whatever way we personally can better “do whatever he tells you” (cf. Jn. 2:5). All of these things are part of what our parish of Holy Rosary does, as well as faith growing opportunities like Alpha and Koinonia. All these are ways that we can do something and effect real renewal.

The staff and I wish everyone a very blessed and Merry Christmas. I pray all may all experience the peace, joy, hope, love and light of our dear Savior’s birth!

In Christ,

Father Vincent