

Dear Brothers and Sisters:

This past Wednesday, May 13<sup>th</sup>, the Church celebrated the Feast of Our Lady of Fatima. As we continue our special observance of this month of May dedicated to Our Lady, I thought I would share part of a homily Pope Saint John Paul II delivered during a pastoral visit to Fatima on May 13, 1982. He reflected, "If the Church has accepted the Message of Fatima, it is above all because that message contains a truth and a call whose basic content is the truth and the call of the Gospel. 'Repent, and believe in the gospel'

(Mk. 1: 15); these are the first words that the Messiah addressed to humanity. The Message of Fatima is, in its basic nucleus, a call to conversion and repentance, as in the Gospel. This call was uttered at the beginning of the Twentieth Century, and it was thus addressed particularly to this present century. The Lady of the Message seems to have read with special insight the 'signs of the times', the signs of our times.

The call of repentance is a motherly one, and at the same time it is strong and decisive. The love that 'rejoices in the truth' (cf. 1 Cor. 13:6) is capable of being clear cut and firm. The call to repentance is linked, as always, with a call to prayer. In harmony with the tradition of many centuries, the Lady of the Message indicates the Rosary, which can rightly be defined as 'Mary's prayer': the prayer in which She feels particularly united with us. She herself prays with us."

These words of the Holy Father are a powerful witness to all the graces and wisdom we receive by listening to Our Mother and striving for that conversion of heart. That conversion experience allows us more and more to have a heart that is open to listening to God speaking to us; of letting go of some of our stubbornness and expectations and allowing God to discover in us a more genuine, more generous way of being. The place of Mary in our lives expressed itself in a very beautiful way this past Sunday when we celebrated our May Crowning.

I am so grateful to Lily Pedrin and Noah Pass who crowned Our Lady at the 9:30 Mass and Alex and Mia Ramos who did the honors at the 11:30 Spanish Mass. It was special to have their families join us and Rhett and Rocky Pedrin provided contemporary music at the 9:30 Mass. It is special moments such as these that, although we cannot all gather together as a community, we are united in love and spirit! Mr. Marc Nava, our school principal, gave a most inspirational reflection at the 9:30 Mass and Fr. Kyle concelebrated the 11:30 Mass, in special recognition of May Crowning and Mother's Day.

This is a special time when we dedicate ourselves to Our Lady and reflect upon the call to mission and discipleship, I would like to offer for our prayer and examination an excellent insight offered by Father Joseph A. Tetlow, S.J., in his book Always Discerning: An Ignatian Spirituality for the New Millennium. He writes, "Our call to live in Christ is not a private matter - it's not 'just about me.' We belong to Christ's people, and it is crucial to realize that 'without this sense of belonging we cannot understand our deepest identity.'

This mentality of belonging can be difficult for those of us who live in individualistic cultures, in which we are told that a person can be authentic only when he or she has created a deep, personal identity. But this is a dangerous assumption. I have observed that the way into disbelief often when a person tries to travel solo.

When we live as discerning disciples, we call to mind that we are in God's image and thus always related to others. Belonging to Christ's people is not 'just a part of my life or a badge I can take off; it is not an 'extra' or just another moment in life.' The truly discerning discover that the more deeply each one becomes himself or herself, the more we turn out to be deeply like one another.

There is another reason our vocation in Christ is not about us only as individuals. 'All the baptized, whatever their position in the Church or their level of instruction in the faith, are agents of evangelization.'"

May God continue to watch over you and bless you in every way!

Fr. Tom