

A Message from Fr. Leandro "Lines" Dela Cruz



This Sunday's Gospel, Jesus sends us a powerful message, not of fear and despair, but of hope and a call to radical optimism. We see Jesus in Capernaum, teaching with authority, a stark contrast to the scribes and Pharisees who wield words as weapons of control. His message is not one of burden and judgment, but of liberation and healing.

Jesus encounters the possessed man. This poor soul, gripped by the darkness, represents not only individual struggles but the very anxieties and issues that grip our families, our society, and our world. We see echoes of it in the brokenness of families, the injustices that fester, the environmental crisis that looms, the whispers of division and fear that seem to permeate the air.

Jesus doesn't run from this darkness. He doesn't cower before the storm. He confronts it head-on, not with a warrior's might, but with the quiet power of his word. He speaks with authority, not the authority of earthly power, but the authority of God's love. And the unclean spirit, faced with this radiant truth, has no choice but to flee.

What does this mean for us, facing our own anxieties and the darkness that surrounds us? It means we are called to cultivate a radical optimism, a steadfast faith that even in the midst of challenges, God's light is present.

This optimism isn't about ignoring problems. It's about approaching them with the confidence that God walks with us, that His grace is sufficient for our challenges. It's about choosing love over fear, unity over division, and action over despair.

The darkness may seem vast, but God's light is infinite. Let us carry that light within us, into our families, within our parish, our communities, and our world. Let us be the living embodiment of hope, the voice of optimism, the living proof that even in the darkest night, dawn is always breaking.

For in the end, it is not the darkness that will prevail, but the love that shines brighter, the hope that never falters, the light that guides us home, Christ.

This weekend begins Catholic Schools Week...a wonderful time to remind us that the mission of Catholic Schools like ours in Saint Ann School is to assist parents in the education and faith formation of their children so they may grow in their love and knowledge of Christ and be moved to serve Him and others. We should be proud that our Saint School carries out this mission with great distinction. Thank you, parents, teachers and staff for all the sacrifices you make for our children. Thank you, too, good parishioners of Saint Ann, for your continued support to our school. Keep helping out to make our school achieve its mission in excellence.

It is with sadness that I inform you of the passing away of Monsignor Ronald 'Ron' Bocovin. Msgr. Bocovin was the Personnel Director then when I was invited to join the Diocese of Trenton. He was such a kind and welcoming priest to adjuncts that inspired me to want to belong to this diocese. Msgr. Bocovin was always available to pitch-in to celebrate Masses with us and helps with other sacramental needs like confessions. He passed away Thursday, January 25, 2024. Funeral Mass will be on Saturday, February 3 at 10am in Saint James Church, Pennington, NJ. Kindly pray for his eternal rest.

God Loves You.