

*Host or designated reader/leader begins the Upper Room prayer hour by reading this message from Fr. David:*

### **Message for August**

Dear friends in Christ:

First of all sorry about July. Things just got away from me. I know you understand but I still am compelled to apologize. This month we will consider obedience to God and His Church. I need you to think of the Church as a living body, not as an institution (which it is as well), but primarily the Church is the Mystical **Body** of Christ and we are “as parts” in relationship with Her. All know the value of obedience, I believe, but few see the fruits because **most** just do their own thing. This is because **mostly** what they are doing is good, they think (or at least they are doing no harm). To be great, to do great things, requires obedience; a virtue that is a constant challenge.

To understand in depth the primacy of obedience we will follow along with Sacred Scripture and the Catechism and examine the obedience of two “Spiritual Giants” in the Body of Christ. Abraham and the Blessed Virgin Mary.

In Christ;

Fr. David

*Open with Sign of Cross and Prayer to the Holy Spirit Prayer*

**Prayer to the Holy Spirit**

**L: Come, O Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of Your faithful, and enkindle in them the fire of your love. Send forth Your Spirit, O Lord, and they shall be created.**

R: And You shall renew the face of the earth

**L: Let us pray - God our Father, pour out the gifts of your Holy Spirit on the world. You sent the Spirit on Your Church to begin the teaching of the Gospel; now let the Spirit continue to work in the world through the hearts of all who believe. Through Christ our Lord.**

R: Amen

**L: You, O lord, will open my lips.**

R: And my tongue shall announce Your praise.

**L: Incline unto my aid, O God.**

R: O Lord, make haste to help me.

**L: Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.**

R: As it was in the beginning is now and ever shall be world without end. Amen

First Read:

Genesis 22:1-8

Then Read the Catechism:

Paragraph #'s 144-147

Discussion Questions:

*\*Side note: I have never noticed before that it took "3 days" to make it to the place of sacrifice. Another connection to the Paschal Mystery of Jesus and our salvation. **Amazing God!***

- 1) How would you talk about being "tested" by God? Recall and share a time when you believed you were being tested? Is it always hard to obey?
- 2) Obedience demonstrates Abraham's faith. I think we would say more readily that "action" demonstrates our faith. Is there a disconnect here? Is one greater than the other?
- 3) "To-hear" or to "listen to" is at the root of the word "obedience". Talk about how well or poorly you listen to others (especially married people with spouses).
- 4) How can we listen to God?
- 5) What place does a well-formed conscience play in obedience to the Mystical Body of Christ?
- 6) What issues or precepts are examples of ones that are most difficult for people to be obedient to Christ and His Church?

Now read:

Luke 1:26-38

And the Catechism:

Paragraph #'s 148-149

Discussion Questions

- 1) This is another insane question being asked of by God's Messenger of one His faithful. Discuss the practical difficulties created by saying "Fiat" for Mary and Joseph.
- 2) Mary's Faith is demonstrated by her obedience. This is the opposite of Abraham. Discuss why.
- 3) Discuss how being conceived without original sin affected Mary's aptitude towards the good.
- 4) Is there a sacrament you would recommend for people who struggle with being obedient to the Church? Why that sacrament in particular?
- 5) What are some of the difficult issues of precepts that members or separated members have in being obedient to the Christ and His Church?
- 6) How does one grow in the virtue of obedience (practically speaking)?

**Pray together:**

**Jesus, Almighty King of kings, You Who obeyed Your Father to the end, Teach me the meaning of obedience. My soul burns to comply to Your Will, Striving to charm Your Divinity. While my worldly nature seeks one way, My spiritual nature seeks another. Bless me with the strength to obey, That my soul may subdue both natures, Blending them as a fair aromatic bloom. I always seek favor in Your eyes, To always obey You until my last breath! AMEN**

"For the intentions of the Holy Father"

Our Father

Hail Mary

Glory Be

Sign of the Cross

*The topic for next month's **Upper Room** is on growing in virtue.*

