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

 **Message for June 2019**

Dear friends in Christ:

Recently at St. James before and after the weekend Mass, as people were coming along the side walk by the handicap parking signs, a killdeer was standing on the ground and screeching at every passerby. It was a remarkable display of courage. People were getting within a foot or two of the bird and it just stood there and made its voice be known (loud and clear) that its nest was near. I do believe this was the mate and guardian of its spouse and eggs. I haven’t been able to spot the nest yet, but another parishioner told me that it was close to the spot where the killdeer was standing (that is) near the Church.

The natural instinct of this Killdeer to warn and protect, not to flinch despite the danger to itself and to make its voice heard (the only thing it had in its arsenal to use against the human intruders) is testament to the great design has God has placed in all living creatures to protect her young. God provides help for the helpless in animals, human beings (and even some plants) by creating in these living things a heightened sense of vigilance and the courage to face an unpredictable world.

In this vein of thought I’d like you to consider now how our young children and youth have been facing a mighty battle with the world, how you can help them, even protect them, from danger. The danger is to their innocence and purity and the battle is all around them. I believe that we are losing the hearts and minds of our young people because their purity has been compromised in very serious ways in the culture we live. I believe a pure heart can receive God’s grace and a pure heart desires to be with God every day. A pure heart worships **GOD ALONE** and does not want to be separated from Him. A pure heart is able to put God first and view the world in a greater relationship to Him as opposed to the world’s position with me. Adults, especially parents, grandparents, teachers, religious leaders, therapists and others who work with and for children and youth must take a stand (like the killdeer) and communicate the danger, the evil, the harmful side of life that is corrupting souls and separating them from a life of grace. I hope to be like that killdeer screeching by the sidewalk but my cry is “protect the innocent” “be vigilant about evil” and “be sensitive to sin and the sinner”.

And so at this Upper Room I would like you to cover some of the following topics as they relate to the issue of purity with children and youth in culture. Friends, pornography, internet and smart phones, social media, modesty in dress, video games, language, gossiping, dating, the 4th Commandment, Mass attendance and active participation at Mass, freedom and having open dialogue. Of course these issues relate to adults too but for this exercise I want your group to focus on how to help our young children, youth and grandchildren.

*(Much of the later text I have recycled from a recent bulletin column)*

In Christ;

Fr. David

*Open with Sign of Cross and pray:*

**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

**For discussion take each of these topics and use the following questions as a guide for each issue. Your discussion can expand from these questions if you wish:**

1. What is the danger or how does this endanger the young person?
2. Is it a question of moderation or elimination? How can you help the young person achieve either of these in their life?
3. So what are the main points you would offer (through dialogue) a youth who is struggling with one of these issues?
4. What things can you (actively) do for a youth who is struggling with one of these issues?

**The issues are:**

1. Negative peer pressure or misleading friends
2. Pornography use (talk about what to say and do when a child gets exposed to it by another friend)
3. Social Media
4. Modesty in dress
5. Dating
6. How to “enforce” the 4th Commandment
7. Phone use at bedtime
8. Talking about the other sex or even homosexual, transsexual, bi-sexual etc., human beings
9. Video game playing
10. (in juxtaposition to these negative factors) How can you talk to youth about the power and value of active participation at Mass?
11. And how do you maintain open and honest communication with your youth

**Pray the following to close:**

**Prayer for Purity**

*Jesus, Lover of chastity, Mary, Mother most pure, and Joseph, chaste guardian of the Virgin, to you I come at this hour, begging you to plead with God for me. I earnestly wish to be pure in thought, word and deed in imitation of your own holy purity.*

*Obtain for me, then, a deep sense of modesty which will be reflected in my external conduct. Protect my eyes, the windows of my soul, from anything that might dim the luster of a heart that must mirror only Christ-like purity.*

*And when the "Bread of Angels becomes the Bread of me" in my heart at Holy Communion, seal it forever against the suggestions of sinful pleasures.*

*Heart of Jesus, Fount of all purity… have mercy on us.*

*Our Father Hail Mary Glory Be Sign of Cross*

**Next month Upper Room on the title of Jesus “I AM”**

**P.S.**

Not sure if I received any information back on the questions I posed last month. Please address the following two questions and get back to Aggie:

1. Upper Room hosts – I would like to know who is currently active in your groups. Please report your members to Aggie at the office.
2. I would like each group to come up with a patron saint’s name / title of Jesus or title of Mary for their group and to incorporate a special prayer begging their intercession each time you meet. Report the name you have chosen after the June meeting to Aggie.