**Upper Room June / July 2020**

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

**Message for June / July**

Dear friends in Christ:

Fear… is the most debilitating human emotion that exists. In this Upper Room you are going to explore the power of fear and then dismantle it with Christ.

In Christ;

Fr. David

**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

**Lesson**

1. *The number one fear we have is death, the second is public speaking, the unknown is the motivating factor to the first and to the second, it is vanity or pride.*
2. What is your greatest fear and what is the underlying or motivating factor behind it.
3. Discuss “control” as it contributes to “fear”. Use the example of a bat flying around in a room to talk about “fear” and something out of your control and how that causes anxiety and discomfort.
4. When you fear something do you ever just close your eyes and try to ignore it… or does that make matters worse for you? Does ignoring a fear ever make matters better?
5. How would a therapist say to address the issue of fear in one’s life?
6. What would a Priest or Spiritual Director say about how to address the issue of fear in one’s life?
7. Quotes from Saints:

*Proclaim the truth and do not be silent through* ***fear.*** *- St. Catherine of Siena*

*He only asks of you abandonment and perfect submission. Nothing displeases Him so much as your uneasiness and despondency. What do you* ***fear****? Is He not powerful enough to support you? Why, then, are you so reserved with Him? Let Him act! - St. Margaret Mary*

***Fear*** *is such a powerful emotion for humans that when we allow it to take us over, it drives compassion right out of our hearts. - St. Thomas Aquinas*

*Men do not* ***fear*** *a powerful hostile army as the powers of hell f****ear*** *the name and protection of Mary. St. Bonaventure*

1. In reference to St. Catherine of Sienna. Have you ever bit your tongue, afraid to speak the truth for being unpopular or different? E.g. the issue of abortion, gay unions, artificial means of Birth Control or other kinds or variations of immoral political policies?
2. In reference to St. Margaret Mary, there is always a lack of faith when there is a presence of fear. How can you remind yourself that Christ will act when you are having a crisis of fear? For example your child is in a hospital bed, not doing well, can you navigate this situation as an authentic Catholic Christian.
3. In reference to St. Thomas Aquinas, doesn’t fear drive out all virtue from the soul (is this temporary or permanent)? Why?
4. In reference to St. Bonaventure, it doesn’t seem conceivable that demons would fear at all. Why do they fear the Blessed Virgin Mary so much?
5. *CCC. 1765*

*There are many passions. The most fundamental passion is love, aroused by the attraction of the good. Love causes a desire for the absent good and the hope of obtaining it; this movement finds completion in the pleasure and joy of the good possessed. The apprehension of evil causes hatred, aversion, and fear of the impending evil; this movement ends in sadness at some present evil, or in the anger that resists it.*

1. Sadness and anger. The plight of the misaligned human being. How many elderly people do you know that get stuck in this way of living towards the end of their life? Can this be reversed?
2. You do know what the opposite of love is right? Discuss
3. “Love” causes a desire for absent good in one’s life. Discuss about how this is a crucial way God’s grace works in and through us.
4. How does one not grow tired in being drawn toward the good?
5. Covid 19 and fear. What happened and how did we lose our center? Or do you think all the fear was justified? Was this the hand of God or the Devil or neither? Discuss please.

**Prayer (please read aloud reverently)**

The LORD is my light and my salvation; whom should I fear?

The LORD is my life’s refuge; of whom should I be afraid?

When evildoers come at me to devour my flesh,[**\***](http://www.usccb.org/bible/psalms/27/#23027002-1)

These my enemies and foes themselves stumble and fall.

Though an army encamp against me, my heart does not fear;

Though war be waged against me, even then do I trust.

One thing I ask of the LORD; this I seek:

To dwell in the LORD’s house all the days of my life,

To gaze on the LORD’s beauty, to visit his temple.

For God will hide me in his shelter in time of trouble,

He will conceal me in the cover of his tent; and set me high upon a rock.

Even now my head is held high above my enemies on every side!

I will offer in his tent sacrifices with shouts of joy;

I will sing and chant praise to the LORD.

Hear my voice, LORD, when I call; have mercy on me and answer me.

“Come,” says my heart, “seek his face”; your face, LORD, do I seek!

Do not hide your face from me; do not repel your servant in anger.

You are my salvation; do not cast me off; do not forsake me, God my savior!

Even if my father and mother forsake me, the LORD will take me in.

LORD, show me your way; lead me on a level path because of my enemies.

Do not abandon me to the desire of my foes; malicious and lying witnesses have risen against me. I believe I shall see the LORD’s goodness in the land of the living.[**\***](http://www.usccb.org/bible/psalms/27/#23027013-1)

Wait for the LORD, take courage; be stouthearted, wait for the LORD!

*Offer prayers of intercession for those in need. Close with an Our Father, Hail Mary and Glory Be.*