

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

Message for October/November 2021

Dear Friends in Christ:

1. "Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they do" (Luke 23:34).
2. "You will be with Me in Paradise" (Luke 23:43).
3. "Woman, behold your son!" (John 19:26-27).
4. "Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani?" that is, "My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?" (Matthew 27:46).
5. "I thirst!" (John 19:28).
6. "It is finished!" (John 19:30).
7. "Father, 'into Your hands I commit My spirit'" (Luke 23:46).

These are the Last Words of Christ spoken from the Cross, and they are profound indicators of the mind of Jesus and His Divine will. Nobody will ever communicate something so profoundly inspiring from a place of death and dying, so deep or inspiring. Jesus spoke these Gospel words as a part of God's Revelation to us, these are important words that guide us to the most important thing of all, the gift of eternal life and attaining the Kingdom.

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

Read number one again from first page.

- The first word of Jesus from the Cross has Jesus pleading to the Father to forgive us because of our ignorance. This is such a common thing in human condition (being ignorant sinners). Share with the group some biblical references to ignorant choices leading to sin and some other historical examples (e.g., Garden of Eden, Nazi Germany) and make reference to what deadly sin(s) were at the root of these ignorant choices in time.
- Why does Jesus seem so willing to forgive sins committed in ignorance?
- Is this forgiveness deserved? Can we even judge that? Why or why not?

Read CCC 270-271

"You are merciful to all, for you can do all things"

270 God is the *Father* Almighty, whose fatherhood and power shed light on one another: God reveals his fatherly omnipotence by the way he takes care of our needs; by the filial adoption that he gives us ("I will be a father to you, and you shall be my sons and daughters, says the Lord Almighty"): finally, by his infinite mercy, for he displays his power at its height by freely forgiving sins.

271 God's almighty power is in no way arbitrary: "In God, power, essence, will, intellect, wisdom, and justice are all identical. Nothing therefore can be in God's power which could not be in his just will or his wise intellect."

- Why is the act of forgiving our neighbor the height of power? Isn't it a seeming contradiction because through the virtue of humility we put aside our pride and become weak? What does someone else's humility or their inflexible pride look and feel like to you? Use personal example of prideful people and humble people.
- God cannot be duplicitous or manipulative or deceptive, His nature and His power are always true to His being. Because He is all knowing (omnipotent) and we are not He lifts us up as a good Father,

understanding our weakness and unbinding our shame and guilt. Where do you experience this power of God most?

- Is it hard for you to forgive certain groups of people? For example, do you forgive or even love those in the opposite political camp of yours? Or does this become a major point of contention because they are wrong and you are right? With abortion and other moral issues, the Church has stated that you are right if you are prolife and you follow the 10 Commandments. How do you think the Father views the political infighting of Nations and the people who live within their borders who wage political battles? Whose prayers does He hear yours or their? Will they be forgiven because of their ignorance? Will you? Will everyone? Who determines who is ignorant and who should be forgiven or judged harshly?

- Can you understand and forgive the illegal immigrant? The poor and desperate masses who will, can or continue to deplete our resources and change our demographics. How does God the Father see the immigrant? Jesus was an immigrant once (in Egypt) and He was foreigner on the cross too, He had no rights because He wasn't a citizen of Rome (under Roman rule - Roman laws benefitted only Roman Citizens). How does the Father view the immigrant in light of his Son? Whose prayers are heard?

Read Luke 15: 11-32

- Discuss the Prodigal Son as a tool to discover the truth of the mind of the Father. Talk about each character in the story (Prodigal Son, Father, Brother) and their:
 - 1) level of ignorance
 - 2) their ability to change
 - 3) their openness to receive or share the light of God (His Grace)

Conclude by praying a Divine Mercy Chaplet