

July 8, 2016

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

A Crazy World

People are worried about the world we live in today. They see things they never would have imagined. The uncertainty about the direction of this world is a cause of great anxiety.

When I talk to parishioners the advice I give them is don't watch too much news, make your family your top priority and be sure to say your daily prayers. I tell them, "don't let anyone rob you of the peace of Christ that God has given you."

On a deeper level we still try to understand what is happening. I listen to other preachers and this is what one from Dallas, Texas said: "God turned the earth over to the devil. The devil became the God of this world. Who you obey tells you who you are ruling under, so when Jesus was tempted by the devil in the wilderness, the devil said I will give you all the kingdoms of this world. The reason why the devil said I will give you all the kingdoms of this world is because he runs the show. This is his territory."

Is it true? Is this his territory? Isaiah spoke of a time of great distress: "Ah! Those who call evil good, and good evil, who change darkness to light, and light into darkness, who change bitter to sweet, and sweet into bitter" (Isaiah 5:20)! Isaiah may well be describing our times. The killer in Orlando acted out of religious hatred. The killer in Dallas acted out of racial hatred.

The preacher from Dallas said, "Who you obey tells you who you are ruling under." The word, "obey" means to listen to. Obey literally means, "to give ear." Older generations of husbands and wives included that word in their wedding vows because they understood that word in its original way. A healthy relationship with God demands that we should listen to God. God's commandments do not permit the killing of innocent people. Whatever our race or religion we have to live together in mutual respect in this country.

"You are not just living a life. You are living a life to advance a cause, the cause of God in history, for he will not do it apart from man, for he said, let them rule, and they can rule for good or for bad. They can rule for me or against me, and I will respect their rule within my boundaries. The rule will be determined by whose word you listen to."

For us, there is no "Brexit". There is no escape from this world. There is no escape from our anxiety, only the responsibility to make this world a better place. The best way, the only way, is for Christians to live united to Christ. St. Peter wrote, "What sort of persons ought you to be, conducting yourselves in holiness and devotion, waiting for and hastening the coming of the day of God ... Beloved, since you await these things be eager to be found without spot or blemish before him, and at peace" (2 Peter 3: 11 - 14).