

Fr. Nick Dant's Homily, Saint Matthew Catholic Church, Indianapolis
Fifth Sunday of Easter, May 10, 2020, Cycle A

“Let nothing disturb you, let nothing frighten you. All things pass away: God never changes; patience obtains all things. Those who know God have everything. God alone is enough.” Thus wrote St. Theresa of Avila in the 16th century. St. Theresa kept this in her prayer book, and she must have prayed her prayer often throughout her troubled life.

Theresa's prayer “Let nothing disturb you – because God alone is enough” is an adaptation of Jesus' invitation to his disciples that begins our Gospel passage for the 5th Sunday of Easter: “Do not let your hearts be troubled.”

Today's Gospel passage comes from Jesus' parting words to his disciples in John's Last Supper scene. It is interesting that as we move toward the end of the Easter season, the Church invites us back to the table of the Last Supper; particularly to reflect on Jesus' farewell discourse in John's Last Supper scene. In the Last Discourse Jesus is seeking to comfort and to strengthen his disciples for his impending passion. Words of comfort, words of consolation, words to strengthen. Words so appropriate for us to hear today as we face the devastation of the coronavirus pandemic. Jesus wants to assure us, so we won't walk in fear. He wants us to know that He and the Father are one, and that if we believe in Him we are one with Him and the Father. Being one with Jesus, we will do the works of Jesus, and even greater works, Jesus says. The works of Jesus are the works that spring out of selfless love for others. Theresa of Avila said “all things pass away!” The corona virus will pass away too, maybe not tomorrow, but Jesus does show us the path – it is the path of following Jesus as our way, truth and life. Filled with Jesus we will be strengthened to serve one another selflessly – we will do the works of Jesus, we will observe all pandemic protocols selflessly out of love for each other, so others not get sick and lives be saved.

Finally, Jesus' words of comfort are appropriate as we celebrate Mother's Day. Jesus answers us that He will never abandon us, and that he is preparing a new place for us, a life that will bring us eternal consolation. How many times have our mothers been that voice of Jesus' consolation and comfort for us! Our mothers assuring us, when we hurt ourselves, or find ourselves in pain, or facing some difficult situation. Our mothers saying let your heart not be troubled, and will always be here for you; I am your home of rest! Thanks to all those mothers who have been the face and voice of Jesus' comfort as we faced the struggle of life.