

LETTER FOR NOVEMBER 16, 2020

Dear Parishioners of Saint Anastasia,

Back in the early days of the pandemic I wrote about different words making their way into our vocabulary; words like “contact tracing” and “social distancing” and all that. The latest thing that seems to be trending is “pandemic fatigue.” While there’s no frantic race to find a vaccine or cure for pandemic fatigue, it is a very real thing. You and I have experienced its effects at one time or another. It comes and goes but it won’t disappear completely. We’re all sick and tired of what’s happening! We’ve had it! While there is no medicinal defense against pandemic fatigue, we can fight it. And the good news is that *we can win!*

A few weeks ago, I was suffering from this malady, but I didn’t recognize it as such. I thought I was just having a good old “bad hair day.” Nothing was getting accomplished. I had one interruption after another. I wasn’t able to finish anything I started because something else kept coming up. I was getting into my car to get to the bank before it closed, and a man called at me from his car on the street. I thought the masked man was a member of our staff so I waited, like he asked, until he drove into the parking lot. I quickly realized that he was not someone who worked here but rather was a parishioner who I hadn’t seen in months. He is a senior in high school and he simply stopped to say hello.

I began our conversation with something like, “I feel so sorry for you kids etc.....your senior year in high school should be fun etc.....it’s awful trying to plan for next year and college and all that....it really stinks.” I didn’t get too far along with my rant because he began to tell me that it really wasn’t all that bad. He readily admitted it was quite different and, in many ways, uncomfortable, but he was coping; he was doing okay. He was enjoying this and that at school. Outside of school he was doing well. His family was fine. He told me about how well his brother and sister were doing. As he continued to talk, I was mortified! I suddenly realized that I was unintentionally about to drag him down to where I was. But, as God would have it, he unintentionally lifted me up to where he was. How did that happen?

It happened because this kid was positive. He didn’t deny anything or say things weren’t real. He said it the way it was, but he was positive! In ten minutes my pandemic fatigue was sent packing. I made up my mind then and there to think positive, speak positive, walk positive - that afternoon - and the next day - and the day after that. It’s not easy and it’s not denial. It’s not escaping from reality. It is letting go of what I can’t control and believing God has given me the ability to rise above myself, and with His help to take myself to a better place. I have to be positive. That’s what I’m trying to do. I’m suggesting it for you.

As a little diversion, get your listening device and find Monty Python’s - *Always Look on the Bright Side of Life*. Turn the volume up and play it a few times. Then go out and be positive. Together we can do this!

God bless us all,
Fr. Colagreco