

*Mother of God Catholic Church*  
*475 Logan Street*  
*Denver, CO 80203*  
*(303)744-1715*

Dearest sisters and brothers in Christ,

We are tethered by threads of perplexity as we attempt to plan our lives going forward. Relentless ambiguity has become the tenor of our daily life. Be it the vicious pandemic that breaks hearts with each passing moment or be it the political turbulence that surrounds us; we are torn by incessant disturbances in our hearts, minds and spirit. What can we do to help restore and heal our delicate shared humanity? What can we do to replenish our souls?

We can pray, pray and pray. We can act to take care of each other as we would want others to care for us and our loved ones. We can affix upon our hearts the eternal love that God has for us. Let us pray that we may find our strength renewed by God's love. May we always remember that His Love embraces our fatigued hearts. May we find solace in our faith, and in our dedication to one another, in God's holy name. As we pray, may we recall the words of *Joshua 1:9*: "Be strong and of a good courage; be not afraid or dismayed, for the Lord your God is with you wherever you go."

Let us devote time to our agonized hearts in the solitude of prayer. Let us pray with others in ways once unconceived yet born of necessity. Let us come together at Holy Mass, more often, online. May we remember to include those among us who struggle in muted isolation. Let us find solace in prayer and in sharing our God given gifts with others. May we be blessed to open our hearts and share all that we can, all that attends to God's will, all that our wallets may spare, as a living testament to our gratitude for the lives we've been blessed with. God is within the breath of life. We are given this breath, so that we may be *in spirit, inspired* to do all that we can for each other.

Let us pray that we may each find the strength to preserve without spiritual fatigue. Though our bodies and minds may indeed be stressed and weary, the love of God prevails. As David said to Solomon: "Be strong and courageous and do the work. Do not be afraid or discouraged, for the Lord is with you. He will not fail you or forsake you until all the work in service to our LORD is finished." (1 Chronicles 28:20)

Let us be a beacon of God's light where darkness resides. May we, by the grace of God, find the peace within us to replace our foreboding with praise and gratitude. Amidst all the suffering, let us focus our energies, talents and gifts to make gentle the life of this world, in all that we think, do and say. May we be ever blessed to do so. **Amen.**

Pax Christi,

Father Vincent Phung

## **From the catechetical instructions by Saint John Mary Vianney, priest**

### *The glorious duty of man: to pray and to love*

My little children, reflect on these words: the Christian's treasure is not on earth but in heaven. Our thoughts, then, ought to be directed to where our treasure is. This is the glorious duty of man: to pray and to love. If you pray and love, that is where a man's happiness lies.

Prayer is nothing else but union with God. When one has a heart that is pure and united with God, he is given a kind of serenity and sweetness that makes him ecstatic, a light that surrounds him with marvelous brightness. In this intimate union, God and the soul are fused together like two bits of wax that no one can ever pull apart. This union of God with a tiny creature is a lovely thing. It is a happiness beyond understanding.

We had become unworthy to pray, but God in his goodness allowed us to speak with him. Our prayer is incense that gives him the greatest pleasure.

My little children, your hearts are small, but prayer stretches them and makes them capable of loving God. Through prayer we receive a foretaste of heaven and something of paradise comes down upon us. Prayer never leaves us without sweetness. It is honey that flows into the soul and makes all things sweet. When we pray properly, sorrows disappear like snow before the sun.

Prayer also makes time pass very quickly and with such great delight that one does not notice its length. Listen: Once when I was a purveyor in Bresse and most of my companions were ill, I had to make a long journey. I prayed to the good God, and, believe me, the time did not seem long.

Some men immerse themselves as deeply in prayer as fish in water, because they give themselves totally to God. There is no division in their hearts. O, how I love these noble souls! Saint Francis of Assisi and Saint Colette used to see our Lord and talk to him just as we talk to one another.

How unlike them we are! How often we come to church with no idea of what to do or what to ask for. And yet, whenever we go to any human being, we know well enough why we go. And still worse, there are some who seem to speak to God like this: "I will only say a couple of things to you, and then I will be rid of you." I often think that when we come to adore the Lord, we would receive everything we ask for, if we would ask with living faith and with a pure heart.