

Daily Message from Msgr. Dennis...

Saturday, May 2, 2020 ~ Feast of St. Athanasius



Readings: Acts 9:31-42; Psalm 116:12-17; Jn 6:60-69

Dear Parishioners:

St. Athanasius, died in 373 A.D., was bishop of Alexandria for 45 years. He was champion of the Council of Nicea (325 A.D.) where the Nicene Creed (which we recite every Sunday) was composed. He fought strenuously against the Arian Heresy that denied the divinity of Jesus and suffered greatly for it. He was exiled 5 times by the Arians. St. Athanasius is one of the four great Doctors of the Eastern Church.

Wouldn't one think that with everything going on people would behave? Perhaps it's being locked up at home and getting bored but rather than pray and work together for the good and unity of society and the Church people are reverting to the tried and true ways of criticism and divisiveness. While things like Facebook can be a great way to stay in touch it can also be a cesspool of personal opinions. It is for good reason that I try to avoid Facebook. Even now people are spewing forth the most awful things about politicians, political parties (both sides are to blame here) the economy – even the Church. God forbid that someone should say something nice or supportive of a person someone else doesn't like. That lets loose a torrent of verbal (and sometimes absolutely vulgar) abuse. Maybe God is allowing us to go through this pandemic as a way of reminding us that **HE** is our life and salvation and we need to clean up our act if we are going to be considered His faithful disciples. Read today's gospel passage from John. It is a beautiful reminder of what we as His disciples are called to believe. I am sometimes dumbstruck by what one side or the other thinks is essential to be a good Catholic, savagely criticizes those with whom they disagree, all the while missing the core of the gospel. Get over it! Stop the grumbling, the criticizing, the self-pity, the gossip and open your hearts to the message of Jesus. Again, read today's gospel passage and let the Holy Spirit breathe in you.

QUESTION: If the parish livestreamed Mass is not public, who are those in the church who are obviously there even though we don't see them?

ANSWER: Those who come to daily Mass all have certain roles to play and are considered by the pastor to be "essential workers."

QUESTION: How many are in attendance?

ANSWER: Usually no more than ten, sometimes a few more, sometimes a few less, all appropriately socially spaced.

QUESTION: Oh yeah? Who decides that?

ANSWER: The Pastor.

QUESTION: Who picks the lectors and why are *they* chosen?

ANSWER: The pastor picks the lectors. They have been chosen because they are the ones who normally read at daily Mass, but if the regular lector is unable to be present and read then someone else is selected.

QUESTION: Why can't I come to Mass during the week?

ANSWER: Like 99.99% of Catholics around the world these days we must be very strict about who attends such services in order to help flatten the curve and come to an eventual end of COVID-19.

QUESTION: Who are those two young men wearing albs and why are they preaching now?

ANSWER: Ok. Let's try this again. Dan Holgren and Brad Easterbrooks are seminarians from the Diocese of San Diego who attend the North American College in Rome and had to return before the end of the academic year due to the horrific outbreak of COVID-19 in Italy. They were invited by the pastor to participate in Mass when they are able. They are not preaching. As seminarians they have been invited to give a reflection on the gospel to help them prepare for the day when they *will* be preaching. We've gone over this before.

QUESTION: I miss going to communion. I don't think it's fair, do you?

ANSWER: No, I don't think it's fair – but who said life is fair? Unfortunately this is the reality of the world in which we find ourselves today.

STATEMENT: I don't like your answers. I'm going to have a good pout and then snip and gossip about it with my friends.

RESPONSE: That's up to you, but maybe you should read the Book of Job before you do.

A Little Humor: Week Four of isolation and it's looking like Las Vegas in my house: We're losing money by the minute. Cocktails are acceptable at any hour.

A FEW GREAT UNRESOLVED CONFUSIONS:

- How come noses run and feet smell?
- Why do we call it a TV "set" when there is only one?
- Who thinks this stuff up?

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