



FLORIDA COUNCIL OF CATHOLIC WOMEN

Province of Miami



Jesus tells us again and again ...

*Take courage, it is I; do not be afraid ... (Mk 6:50) (also Mt 14:27; Jn 6:18-21)*

*Do not be afraid ... (Mt 28:10)*

*Do not let your hearts be troubled or afraid ... (Jn 14:27)*

*Do not be afraid; from now on you will be catching men ... (Lk 5:10)*

*Therefore do not be afraid of them ... (Mt 10:26)*

*Rise and do not be afraid ... (Mt 17:7)*

*Do not be afraid; just have faith ... (Mk 6:50)*

*Why are you terrified? Do you not yet have faith? (Mk 4:40) (also Lk 8:50)*

The coronavirus pandemic has turned the whole world upside down, and rightfully so. Society as we know it has been shut down; the economy is in upheaval; we don't know who might be a carrier; our family and friends don't want to get near us; and all our habits, our activities and social gatherings, and even our family relations have changed drastically. We are taking a risk to go to the store for things we need and we are not allowed to attend Mass – or hold our conventions :(

God! Where are you and what is going on?!

Listening to people these days I sense a lot of fear. I pray that we can all keep Jesus' words in our hearts and on our minds lest our fears overcome us. That's when Satan does his best work, and we are starting to see the results of it. Sensible caution with deep trust in God's divine plan for us will allow the peace of Christ to guide our actions and calm our rattled nerves. We should never think that we are in control (want to hear God laugh? make your own plans). Blessed those are who truly believe that we have a loving Father who holds our lives in the palm of his hand, who knows all things and wants what is best for his beloved children.

We don't often want to accept the trials and challenges the Lord gives us, and we certainly didn't ask for this one. But you know and I know that we have learned much about ourselves and about life from our previous trials and have grown stronger by the challenges we have already overcome – with the Lord's help. JRR Tolkien once wrote: "Are not all of God's punishments also gifts?" In a few years, this crisis will be no different. We will laugh at what we didn't know or understand and share our bizarre experiences. And in retrospect we might realize what God is trying to teach us.

*Can any of you by worrying add a moment to your life span? ...*

*Do not be afraid any longer, little flock, for your Father is pleased to give you the kingdom. (Lk 12:25, 32)*

Joan Walker, Spirituality Commission Chair