

Respect Life Mass

October 6, 2019

Today Habakkuk cries out to God from the depths of his being: “How long, O Lord?” The people of God, the prophet says, have lost their way. They have abandoned the values of the covenant that are to guide their relationships with God and one another. Instead of searching for the truth, there is deceit. Instead of caring for the poor and vulnerable, there is greed and selfishness. Instead of service, there is grasping for power and domination. Instead of respect for every human life, there is neglect and violence. How long, Habakkuk prophet asks, before all of us come to our senses?!

We live in a time of deepening divisions within our society. Polarization has set in, and the unity of a harmonious society has been fractured. There is widespread abandonment of our basic values -- the values of the gospel, the teaching of the Church.

What can we do? First, we pray to God who alone can set things right. God’s plan is that we live in peace, harmony, and unity. God’s kingdom is a place of respect for every human life, peace and justice, mercy and compassion, love. We need to pray daily to

acknowledge that our lives are ultimately in God's good, loving, and powerful hands. We need to ask the Holy Spirit for wisdom, strength, and courage to strive for respect for every human life.

St. Theresa of Avila said we are to pray as though everything depends on God – because it does! And to work as though everything depends on us --- because it does! Therefore, we also have to act in order to restore our values in our society. Jesus came among us as one who serves, not as one who is to be served. We need to get out of our isolation and work for justice and peace, for the care of the poor and vulnerable, for defense of the unborn and the born! God creates every person in his own image and likeness. Wherever life is discounted or threatened or taken, all lives are eventually in jeopardy. While some may rightly focus on a single life issue, the Church as a whole – including its priests and bishops – need to address all human life issues. We need to support one another and work together in defense of all human life.

St. Paul reminds us that the Holy Spirit, who dwells within us, will guide and strengthen us on our journey. *Ven, Holy Spirit, Ven!* Our Lady of Guadalupe is with us always. Dear Lady, help us!