



***June 1, 2020-Reflections for the Easter Season Ms. Albano***

*In the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Amen.*

*Dear God, I acknowledge the Mississauga's of the Credit First Nation for being the ongoing stewards of this traditional territory.*

***A reading from the Gospel of John***

*“Meanwhile, standing near the cross of Jesus were his mother, and his mother’s sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene. When Jesus saw his mother and the disciple whom he loved standing beside her, he said to his mother, ‘Woman, here is your son.’ Then he said to the disciple, ‘Here is your mother.’ And from that hour the disciple took her into his own home.*

*After this, when Jesus knew that all was now finished, he said (in order to fulfil the scripture), ‘I am thirsty.’” (John 19:25-27)*

The mother of CNN correspondent Omar Jimenez watched how police officers arrested her son on May 29, 2020. She watched the officers handcuff him while he was covering the protests in Minnesota. A protest was in response to the wrongful death of George Floyd. Then, she heard her son ask why he was being arrested and heard nothing from the arresting officers. Hours went by and she did not know what happened to her son till CNN reported that the Governor of Minnesota released him and his film crew. During that time of uncertainty, she lived in fear that she would never see her son again. A fear rooted in the fact that he is an African American.

He is an African American arrested by a police force that had used excessive force to detain and eventually kill George Floyd. In an eight minute and forty-second video, we watched how a police officer held an African American down with his knee, which was blocking his ability to breathe. The pleas of a man who screamed, “I can’t breathe,” where the police did not show mercy. His words and a video which sparked protests across the United States of America for justice for the wrongful death of George Floyd. Unfortunately, protests which escalated into looting and rioting and continue today.

Watching this story unfold, everything ugly in American history and culture is on full display-our humanity. The deep-rooted racism and pleas for justice are still being played out violently on American soil. Mix that in with the devastating effects and division caused by COVID-19, and leadership which is equally divisive, you wonder if there is anything which will pull the Americans together in a time when they need each other.

I draw strength and hope from the Feast of Pentecost. Yesterday, we celebrated the third important feast in the Church. During the Feast of Pentecost, we celebrate the day when God gave us the Holy Spirit to give us the courage and wisdom to understand and see God's mercy and love for humanity. The day we accept our responsibility and proclaim the Gospel to the ends of the earth. On this day, we became the Church. We became a community who gather at the Lord's table to nourish ourselves on Word and Sacrament then to share what we have with others in the name of the Lord. The day when we spoke in different languages and understood each other. The feast where we celebrate the foretaste of heaven to live in union with Christ and treat each other with the respect and love because we are the beloved child of God, brother and sisters in Christ, and companion of the Holy Spirit.

I pray that as we celebrate the Memorial of the Blessed Mother, the Mother of the Church, we ask for healing for all mother's who have lost her children, especially the mother of Regis Korchinski-Paquet who died last week in Toronto. For mother's who worry about their children in the real world who have the extra layer of living in fear or an anxious state because of the colour of their skin. May the Mother of God watch and pray for you in your times of suffering. Know that she has experience the loss of a son to unjust laws and a perverted justice system. Take comfort in her sorrowful heart to find the peace and comfort that can only come through her Son. May the Blessed Mother guide us to ponder and trust in the words of Jesus who said, "Remember I am with you always till the end of days." Amen. In the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Amen