



# Knights of Columbus Council 9542

THE CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY OF AMERICA

Washington, DC 20064

*In Service to One, In Service to All*

Evil is all around us, that's nothing new. Every day it seems that there's yet another shooting spree, hostage crisis, or terrorist attack, on top of the daily scandals, injustices, and crimes that are reported, which dims our view of our neighborhood, Nation, and the world. In such frequency, these stories can eventually blend together in our minds and we may become numb to their impact, particularly on those closely affected. Then there come events that really shock us to the core of our being, striking through all of the mental barriers we may have erected to minimize such pain. The darkness in our world then seems to encircle us ever-tighter and causing us to wonder if there is any hope of recovery or a return to any semblance of normalcy.

The morning after the attacks in Paris, I was eating breakfast at the Shrine when I picked up on the sound of "Be Not Afraid" playing in the background. Now even the Second Coming is more frequent than any change in the ambient music of the Shrine, and this was far from the first time I have heard that simple message. Of course, such a tragedy forces us to view the world around us differently and similarly take to heart that which we may take for granted. While we should not lose ourselves in dizzying worry after every trial and tribulation that plagues our world, we are all too conscious that we are emotional beings, that we do feel real pain and experience real suffering. But so did Christ, and He did so all too well throughout His life, even as it left Him hanging on that Cross. And so too did His Blessed Mother, whose heart was oh so pierced and afflicted as she looked upon that incredible Sight upon Calvary.<sup>1</sup>

As we enter the penultimate week of the Church's liturgical year, the readings at Mass serve to remind us in apocalyptic terms of the coming of God's kingdom at the "end times".<sup>2</sup> As Pope Francis reiterated during this morning's Angelus address, the final goal of our lives here on earth is our encounter with the Risen Christ.<sup>3</sup> "How many of you think about that?" he asked the crowds gathered in a sunny St. Peter's Square.<sup>4</sup> The problem is not when these apocalyptic warning signs of the end of

<sup>1</sup> Cf. John 19:37.

<sup>2</sup> Mark 13:32, cf. Mark 13:21.

<sup>3</sup> Pope Francis, Sunday Angelus, Vatican Website, November 15, 2015, accessed November 15, 2015, [https://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/angelus/2015/documents/papa-francesco\\_angelus\\_20151115.html](https://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/angelus/2015/documents/papa-francesco_angelus_20151115.html).

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

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this world will occur, he said, but whether we will be ready for that encounter.<sup>5</sup> Similarly, the problem is not how the end of the world will happen, but how we should behave in the meantime. We are called to live in the present, the Pope said, building the future with serenity, trust and hope in God.<sup>6</sup> Hope, he said, is the hardest virtue to live out, but it is also the strongest as it reflects the face of the Risen Christ.<sup>7</sup> Jesus is not only the final destination of our pilgrimage here on earth, but he is also present in our daily lives to accompany us and rescue us from false prophets and fatalistic ideas.<sup>8</sup> Remember, “The good seek justice, not revenge.”<sup>9</sup> There is just cause for action against ISIS, but this can't justify regressing to their dark standards.”<sup>10</sup>

How desperately the world needs to be reminded of another simple message repeated in Sacred Scripture: *Pax vobiscum*— peace be with you— an invitation to set aside any and all of the worries, the disappointments, the troubles, and the restlessness burdening each and every person. How necessary is it for us to recognize this great greeting of blessing and to appreciate the call for us to focus on God and His infinite love for us! As Christians, we are to share the Good News of Christ with the whole world, even with those who hate It and thereby us. We, then, are still commissioned to spread and live this Message of God's peace, love, mercy, and hope, sharing It freely in our encounters with others wherever they are in life, no matter their circumstances. At the same time, we need to call out evil for what it is and minister to those whose lives have been thrown into seemingly endless turmoil. We are not to close ourselves off to the world, but to “rejoice with those who rejoice” and “mourn with those who mourn.”<sup>11</sup> Finally, let us recall the entreating of St. Paul, “Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.”<sup>12</sup>

May God bless you, and God love you!

Fraternally,

SK Thomas Wong

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<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid.

<sup>9</sup> Romans 12:19.

<sup>10</sup> Chad Pecknold, Twitter post, November 14, 2015, 12:57 PM, <https://twitter.com/ccpecknold>.

<sup>11</sup> Romans 12:15.

<sup>12</sup> Romans 12:21.

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