

## Message from the Rector

Dear People of God,

The Lord is Risen! Alleluia!

On this Divine Mercy Sunday, we are an Easter people and the promise of the Risen Lord is so abundant we call it eternal. I would like to share with you a powerful story. It is truly worth reading – and sending to a loved one.

Rose displays the type of attitude so badly needed at all times, but especially now as we continue to battle COVID-19. And please remember: Peace over panic. Faith over fear. Wisdom over worry. With the help and grace of God, this too shall pass.

### The Rose

The first day of school our professor introduced himself and challenged us to get to know someone we didn't already know. I stood up to look around when a gentle hand touched my shoulder. I turned around to find a wrinkled little old lady beaming up at me with a smile that lit up her entire being. She said, "Hi, handsome. My name is Rose. I'm 87 years old. Can I give you a hug?" I laughed and enthusiastically responded, "Of course you may!" and she gave me a giant squeeze. "Why are you in college at such a young, innocent age?" I asked. She jokingly replied, "I'm here to meet a rich husband, get married, have a couple of children, and then retire and travel." "No, seriously," I asked. I was curious what may have motivated her to be taking on this challenge at her age. "I always dreamed of having a college education and now I'm getting one!" she told me.

After class we walked to the student union building and shared a chocolate milkshake. We became instant friends. Every day for the next three months we would leave class and talk nonstop. I was always mesmerized listening to this "time machine" as she shared her wisdom and experience with me. Over the course of the year, Rose became a campus icon and easily made friends wherever she went. She loved to dress up and she reveled in the attention bestowed upon her from the other students. She was living it up.

At the end of the semester we invited Rose to speak at our football banquet and I'll never forget what she taught us. She was introduced and stepped up to the podium. As she began to deliver her prepared speech, she dropped her three by five cards on the floor. Frustrated and a little embarrassed, she leaned into the microphone and simply said, "I'm sorry I'm so jittery. I gave up beer for Lent and this whiskey is killing me! I'll never get my speech back in order so let me just tell you what I know." As we laughed, she cleared her throat and began:

“We do not stop playing because we are old; we grow old because we stop playing. There are only four secrets to staying young, being happy and achieving success. You have to laugh and find humor every day. You’ve got to have a dream. When you lose your dreams, you die. We have so many people walking around who are dead and don’t even know it! There is a huge difference between growing older and growing up. Anybody can grow older. That doesn’t take any talent or ability. The idea is to grow up by always finding the opportunity to change. I have no regrets. The elderly usually don’t have regrets for what we did, but rather for things we did not do. The only people who fear death are those with regrets.”

She concluded her speech by courageously singing “The Rose.” She challenged each of us to study the lyrics and live them out in our daily lives. At the year’s end, Rose finished the college degree she had begun all those years ago. One week after graduation, Rose died peacefully in her sleep. More than 2,000 college students attended her funeral in tribute to the wonderful woman who taught by example that it’s never too late to be all you can possibly be.

Lent—Holy Week—Easter! It’s never too late to “rise” to new heights with the Lord Jesus walking at our side no matter what life throws at us.

Joyfully though a bit stressed,

Fr. Greg

P.S. On Good Friday Capuchin Father Raniero Cantalamessa, preacher of the papal household, preached a sermon to Pope Francis and to the rest of the world. It is very powerful. Please share with family and friends . . . . .

“The pandemic of Coronavirus has abruptly roused us from the greatest danger individuals and humanity have always been susceptible to: the delusion of omnipotence.

It took merely the smallest and most formless element of nature, a virus, to remind us that we are mortal, that military power and technology are not sufficient to save us.

God at times disrupts our projects and our calm to save us from the abyss we don’t see.

The virus knows no borders. In an instant, it has broken down all the barriers and distinctions of race, nation, religion, wealth, and power. We should not revert to that prior time when this moment has passed.

As Pope Francis has exhorted us, we should not waste this opportunity. Let us not allow so much pain, so many deaths, and so much heroic engagement on the part of health workers to have been in vain. Returning to the way things were is the ‘recession’ of which we should have the most fear.

Let us leave to the next generation a world poorer in goods and money, if need be, but richer in its humanity.”

All I can add to his profound message is a resounding . . . . . AMEN!

### HUMOR FROM THE RECTOR



“I am proud to report I found something I wore 10 years ago and it still fits. It’s a scarf!”