

## Illuminating the Darkness

June 21, 2020 - 12th Sunday of Ordinary Time Cycle A

There is an old joke about a teacher who, on the first day of school, sent a note home with each child. It read,  
“If you believe only half of what your child says happens in school,  
I will only believe half of what she says goes on in your home.”

But there is an element of truth in that joke. We don't like family secrets to be told.  
Now I am not going to tell you any family secrets,  
nor tell you of any of the skeletons in my closet.  
And I don't expect you to tell me yours...but that in itself is a real problem.  
The incidence of mental health problems is skyrocketing.  
Leading to a river of people confiding in: doctors, counselors and psychologists

Now I will be the first to admit that I am not a counselor, a psychologist, nor a doctor,  
but I have heard enough confessions to know that many of the problems that exist in individuals,  
and families, are undiscussed secrets.  
I have a friend whose mother always had intimacy issues, and it was only shortly before her death  
that she talked about being raped by an uncle, when she was a teenager.  
Had the family known that, talked through it, and supported her, their family life would have been  
much healthier.

Jesus tells us *“Nothing is covered up that will not be uncovered.”*

We have all heard the old saying,  
“You can fool some of the people all of the time,  
and all of the people some of the time,  
but you cannot fool all the people all the time.

I would add to this, “You can never fool God!”

We don't have a problem seeing through the people whom we interact with.  
Conversely we truly believe that no one can see through us.  
If that is not a double standard, I am not sure what is.

And this is precisely where problems develop.

We use a tremendous amount of energy trying to suppress our secrets, and sins.

What we don't realize is that *“Nothing is covered up that will not be uncovered.”*

Trying to hide a sin, or secret, is like playing “Whack a mole”  
at the exhibition when it comes to town.

Our attempts to suppress our secret may be successful in one particular area,  
but then it will become manifest in another area of our life.

We then suppress it in that part of our life and it pops us,  
and so it goes with our secrets and sins  
continually popping up and us continually whacking it down.

Now people on the outside...they might not know what the exact secret or sin is...  
but you can be sure that they know that something is wrong...  
but they are playing the same game,  
so no one ever strives to determine the root of the problem.

After a lifetime of clinical service a famous physiologist  
summed up his whole life's work with a single statement—  
“It is unlove that has made the world unwell, and it is love and love alone that will make it well.”

Jesus understood this, this is why his message was always focused on love—  
love of God and love of neighbour.

Because it is only love that can heal those deep, dark secrets that we do not want anyone to know about.  
Hold that thought for a moment...

The first words of the first reading are powerful, “*Terror is all around.*”

Now admittedly Jeremiah was speaking about physical violence.

His enemies stood in the wings with clubs and knives.

But the same could be said about the Corona virus... “*Terror is all around.*”

Not in the form of violence, but in the form of a tiny virus.

Already over 8,000,000 people have been infected,

with another million every 10 – 12 days, not to mention 5000 deaths a day.

And there is no end in sight.

Whether it is, as it is in some parts of the world, fear of physical violence,

or in other parts of the world, fear of the Corona virus, people huddle in their homes out of fear.

What is the answer?

For me I take comfort in seeing people live and thrive in an environment of “*Terror is all around*” and  
who believe “*Nothing is covered up that will not be uncovered.*”

Offhand; I know of only a few

Mother Theresa who saw the terror violence of loneliness,  
and worked all her life to uncover it.

Archbishop Oscar Romero who was in El Salvador in the 1970's  
when the “Government Death squads were rampant.”

Most of you know what Mother Theresa did, but let me give you a short description of what Arch  
Bishop Oscar Romero did.

Every Sunday he preached at the Cathedral.

His homilies so electrified the country that national affairs halted when he spoke from the altar.

His congregation overflowed onto the square.

Loudspeakers took his words to those who could not get inside.

Radio took them even further.

He named names, dates, places, where human rights had been violated.

He made public the unspeakable crimes being committed by many agents of the government.

He was under constant threat of death.

Some of his best friends were murdered. And still he would not be silenced.

Nor would he go into hiding or exile.

He always said, “At the first sight of danger

the shepherd cannot run and leave the sheep to fend for themselves...

I will stay with my people.”

According to Romero, it didn't take courage.

All it took was the understanding that it was his enemies, who dwelt in fear,  
and that as he was not afraid of them,

therefore they would have no power over him.  
They might be able to kill his body,  
but they would not and could not kill his soul.

Mother Theresa died, or perhaps more appropriately, her body wore out.

Arch Bishop Oscar Romero was shot while celebrating Mass.

But all their lives they worked to uncover the secrets and the sins that keep people in bondage.

We have a choice, we can sweep our secrets and sins under the carpet,  
pretend that they do not exist...and for the rest of our lives be unhealthy,  
all the while living in terror that they will be exposed.

Or we can uncover them, bring them into the light and with God's help overcome them.

Let us all pray that we can bring the light of Christ to the dark recesses of our soul.