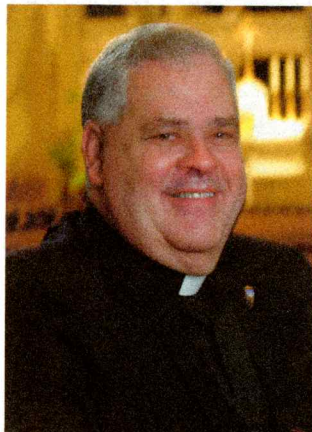


FROM THE PASTOR

BASILICA of St Mary
Minneapolis Oct 2020



Fr. John M. Bauer

Pastor

The Basilica of Saint Mary

A few weeks ago Fr. Tim Backous, OSB, who helped out on weekends at The Basilica several years ago, sent me a copy of a talk on racism that Abbot John Klassen gave at a conference of the monks of Saint John's Abbey. I have been trying to write something on this topic for a while now with little success. I was so impressed with Abbot John's talk, though, that I asked his permission to share a portion of it via this newsletter. He willingly gave permission, but with the caveat that I be clear that one of the sources for his talk was Fr. Bryan Massingale. I told him I would be pleased to do that. Below then is a portion of the talk Abbot John gave to the monks of Saint John's Abbey on July 7, 2020. While this talk was given specifically to the monks, I believe it has meaning for all of us.

Father Bryan Massingale, a distinguished black faculty member at Fordham University, has written a powerful reflection on the challenge that faces the white community at this time. He makes some concrete suggestions for moving forward which serves as a template for the following reflections.

First, we need to *understand the difference between being uncomfortable and being threatened*. There is no way to tell the truth about race in this country without white people becoming uncomfortable. Because the plain truth is that if it were up to people of color, racism would have been resolved, over and done, a long time ago. *The only reason for racism's persistence is that white people continue to benefit from it*, and we benefit from it, whether we know it or not. This truth makes my head and heart hurt.

What to do next? At first, nothing. *Sit in the discomfort this hard truth brings*. It needs to be agonizing. Let it move me to tears, to anger, to guilt, to frustration, to embarrassment. For what? For my ignorance. For my lack of understanding of the underlying issues that black and Latino people face every day. On any given day, at any given hour, their right to be on this good earth can be challenged. Because only when a critical mass of white people are outraged, grieved and pained over the status quo—only when white people become upset enough to declare, "This cannot and will not be!"—only then will real change begin to become a possibility.

Second, we need to *admit our ignorance and do something about it*. We need to understand that there is a lot about our history and about life that we're going to have to unlearn. And learn over. We have all been taught an incomplete version of America that masks our terrible racial history. As white Americans we do not have an accurate sense of the long tail of damage that slavery did to our nation. The impact of the Jim Crow laws that neutralized black efforts to become active citizens in our democracy. We probably know very little of the terror of lynching. For a 30-year period from 1885-1915, on average every third day a black person was brutally and savagely and publicly murdered by white mobs. At present, black and brown people experience law enforcement as the latest version of this reign of terror.

Third, are there creative things we can do as a community that allow for learning on a deep existential level? Are there ways to invite our whole campus into this powerful moment and see it as a graced time for conversion toward Gospel justice and the inclusiveness of the reign of God? As a community we are profoundly related to alums and friends, so many of whom have been deeply moved by the events of the past five weeks. They look to us not so much for answers as for moral leadership, for the affirmation that our country needs to deliver on its promise of freedom to all of its citizens and to those who come to our doors.

MASS SCHEDULE UPDATES

SUNDAY LIVESTREAM: MASS

9:30AM

Live on mary.org and Facebook at facebook.com/BasilicaMpls

Mass Recording Archive
mary.org/massrecordings

MASS: PUBLIC WORSHIP

11:30AM

Open for public worship. Please register online at mary.org. New Mass times will be posted to mary.org as capacity allows.

WEEKDAY EUCHARIST MONDAY-FRIDAY, NOON

Open for public worship. Please register online at mary.org.

MASS REGISTRATION PROCESS

- Pre-registration is required and opens 24 hours before each Mass.
- Register at mary.org or call the Director of Engagement at 612.317.3417.
- Registration closes at 10:00am for weekday Mass and 8:00am for Sunday Mass, or if we have reached capacity.
- You may only register for one weekday Mass at a time.
- Be sure to bring a face mask with you, which needs to be worn over your nose and mouth **at all times** at The Basilica.

THE BASILICA OF SAINT MARY

A community rooted in the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

As disciples of Jesus Christ, we:

- Practice biblical stewardship
- Share our faith with others in word and deed
- Pursue ecumenical and interfaith relationships
- Rejoice in rich diversity

As the Co-Cathedral of the Archdiocese of Saint Paul and Minneapolis, we are committed to provide:

- Inspiring liturgies and sacred arts
- Transforming life-long learning opportunities
- Engaging service to one another and justice for all

PRAYER RESOURCES

Vespers and Prayer services recorded live are available on at mary.org/vespersandprayers.

Pray the Rosary together either in person or virtually with us; we have made a virtual Rosary available at mary.org/rosary.

88 N 17th St
Minneapolis, MN 55403
612.333.1381
mary.org

Fourth, we need to be aware of the expression of racist attitudes in members of our community. When we encounter these expressions, we may not be silent. If there was ever a time and a place for fraternal correction, this is surely it. Sometimes we may be too patient, too tolerant and dismiss a comment as insensitive or ignorant when in fact, it is just racist, and is extremely harmful in a community where we are working every day to be inclusive.

Finally, we need to *pray the psalms in fresh and imaginative way*. The psalms are filled with lament, with the voices of men and women who are being crushed every day, people who have nowhere to turn. True, racism is a political issue and a social divide. But at its deepest level, racism is a sickness of the soul. It is a profound warping of the human spirit that enables human beings to create communities of callous indifference toward their darker sisters and brothers. As historian Paul Wachtel succinctly declares in his book *Race in the Mind of America*, "The real meaning of race comes down largely to this: *Is this someone I should care about?*" Our Catholic and Benedictine monastic tradition have powerful responses to these questions and strong spiritual resources to support reflection and action. They also have the ethical foundation on which to stand. Let there be no question: this is an urgent time, a decisive moment, and we may not let it slip away."

SAFELY CELEBRATING MASS

The Basilica is our spiritual home—a place of welcome. We want each person who enters The Basilica to feel safe. The Basilica will follow all city and state health and safety guidelines.

You will see new practices and policies when you return. The policies will continue to change as we monitor the official guidelines. Pre-registration for Mass is required at mary.org or call our Director of Engagement at 612.317.3417.

Please review all of the protocols on the registration form. To help explain our protocols we have prepared a brief video which is available at mary.org/massregistration.

Your cooperation in these extraordinary times embodies our vision to seek the well-being of our community. Archbishop Hebda's dispensation from the obligation to attend Mass continues.

We will continue to livestream Mass Monday - Friday at Noon and Sunday at 9:30am at mary.org and Facebook live at facebook.com/BasilicaMpls.

Please consider refraining from Mass in-person if you:

- 1.) Experienced or have been near someone who experienced: cough, cold, flu, fever of 100°F +, shortness of breath, sore throat, or a loss of taste or smell.
- 2.) Have underlying medical conditions, including but not limited to: asthma, diabetes, heart condition, pregnancy, severe obesity, a compromised immune system, diseases of the lungs, kidneys, or liver, or are receiving cancer treatment.
- 3.) Live in a nursing home, long-term care or congregant living facility.
- 4.) Are age 65 or over.

Anyone concerned with interpersonal proximity, even with social distancing, should prayerful consider the prudence of attending Mass in-person.