

## **Bishop Barres' Homily on Friday of the Third Week of Lent from St. Agnes Cathedral this Morning, March 20, 2020**

**I received an email yesterday afternoon from one of our dedicated pastors at 3:08pm right before the televised rosary we prayed with Our Holy Father Pope Francis. The message moved me very much and I'd like to share it with all of you.**

**The pastor wrote: "I pray that the wisdom and discernment that entered the heart of Saint Joseph each time he experienced disruption and confusion in the life of the Holy Family may lead and guide us. Help us to keep St. Joseph's spirit of poise and his constant focus on the Heavenly Father. May Mary's mantle of protection surround each of us."**

**The lives of both Mary and Joseph were biblically on Fire with God's love as they lived their own particular missions in Salvation History.**

**In *The Word of the Lord (Verbum Domini)*, Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI writes: "The interpretation of Sacred Scripture would remain incomplete were it not to include listening to those who have truly lived the word of God; namely the saints...The most profound interpretation of Scripture comes precisely from those who let themselves be shaped by the word of God through listening, reading, and assiduous meditation...Every saint is like a ray of light streaming forth from the word of God."**

**Every saint in the history of the Church, century by century, was a marvelous ray of light that streamed forth from a variety of Scripture passages that nourished and fed them.**

**One Old Testament and New Testament saturated passage that inevitably fed all the saints, especially in the moments of crisis in their lives, was the passage from Mark 12 that we just heard: "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength. You shall love your neighbor as yourself."**

**This is a very powerful passage for each of us to pray and commit to memory during these challenging days of the corona virus outbreak.**

**When we feel overwhelmed, confused, anxious, or panicked, we can pray: “I love you Lord with all my heart, with all my soul, with all my mind and with all my strength. I love my neighbor as I love myself.”**

**When we are concerned about elderly parents and relatives who may be at a distance, when we pray for doctors, nurses, health care workers, research scientists, civic officials, and our families, we can pray together: “We love you Lord with all our hearts, with all our souls, with all our minds and with all our strength, We love our neighbors as we love ourselves.”**

**We pray that our individual lives and our lives in communion with Christ and the mission of mercy of the Church may be powerful lights that stream from this passage of Scripture and every passage of Scripture. God Bless you!**