

HOLINESS THAT CANNOT ESCAPE OR BE DENIED

The world is turned upside down. We have lived in a time where nothing is the same. The unimaginable led our year to bring us to this point. It began in fear of the unknown. A virus we knew little about challenged our expressions of life. Outside was moved inside; the world was turned upside down. We learned from fear how to cope and to control what we could control. Many did not survive and we must hold them in our hearts. Increased pain forced by separation and isolation magnified our moments. It caused us to reevaluate and we could not escape it. All of our lives are affected. There was and is no way to escape it. Transmission of a virus took our attention and we worked together to learn more, and to intensify what was hope-filled, and to persevere.

The world is upside down, never to be the same. This week God longs for us to embrace a world of grace. We cannot escape it. The world changed during the last days in the life of Jesus. Fear, jealousy, and control historically set the events that would take place in motion. The Son of God would turn the world upside down. He would lose His life to save ours. Pain and separation of the agony on the cross should cause us to reevaluate everything. Love would crush the powers of hell and the evil one. We cannot escape it. The world can never be the same. Our lives are affected by what Jesus did. We cannot escape it. The world turned upside down, curtains were torn, world powers were silenced and their lack of spiritual power was magnified. Sacrifice and forgiveness were revealed as true power. Holiness became a new way.

We have many choices placed before us. This is Holy Week. As Catholics, we are invited to these most sacred days to know our lives cannot escape what Jesus did. We are to gather to celebrate this mystery in which the world is upside down. Death and the unimaginable are to lead us to the undeniable. Our presence in these mysteries feeds our faith, calms our fears, and strengthens our resolve to become a people of holiness. Please allow yourself to seek what is real. Be present to all of this in the ways that allow you to feel safe. I caution you to not allow limits of numbers and inconvenience of time to lure you into complacency that all of this does not have power. Holiness cannot escape this time, these celebrations, and the power of God that has been promised.

This week belongs to Him and Holiness will not escape it or be denied.



Father John Ouper