

6th Saturday of Easter “God is not a Genie”
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Well, we heard it from the President yesterday...we are an essential service. I agree! When the list came to us from the governor’s office of what was considered “essential”, on page 4 marijuana shops were listed there as an essential business. You may recall I made the joke that perhaps we should open up a pot store out of the parish office so we could keep our doors open. We were going to call that business “Holy Smoke”, remember? Thank goodness that won’t be necessary. However, the Archdiocese is still going to need a couple weeks to figure out how to open safely. Although we see ourselves as an essential service, we also value the sanctity of human life which includes doing what we can to keep people from getting sick. We are going to figure out what that means for us when we open up to the public again and prepare accordingly. Personally, I hope that day comes really soon. That would be an answered prayer.

Jesus says, “Amen, amen, I say to you, whatever you ask the Father in my name he will give you.” I have long puzzled over this statement because, when interpreted literally and without nuance... obviously not everything you ask the Father, even if it is in Jesus’ name, is going to be given to us. If we ask God in Jesus’ name to win the lottery...well, that most likely isn’t going to happen. If we ask God for our sport’s team to win a trophy...well, God isn’t that interested in the Mariners. And, as we know, if we ask God for the cure of some disease, there are times God answers that prayer and sometimes he doesn’t to our satisfaction. You see, I think there is sometimes a bad habit some people get into of treating God like some kind of a genie from a lamp. As in, whatever you ask of God he has to give you, that kind of thing. When we think of God in that way, put him to the test as Jesus warns us against, we have left Christianity and become full blown pagan in our spirituality. A centerpiece of paganism is the idea we can somehow control the divine will by the power of our own.

Jesus also teaches us to pray to the Father, “Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven”. I believe this is how we are to understand what Jesus is telling us today in our Gospel reading. Whenever we ask the Father for something in Jesus’ name...what that means is, we are conforming our will to the divine will. When our human will is united with the divine will, the prayer will be answered. When our human will is close to the divine will, the prayer will also be answered...in the way God knows we need it answered the most.

And so a reflection for today might be, how much do we trust God in this respect? Do we honestly believe that God knows what is best for us? Are we willing to let our will be one with the divine will? Once we have answered these questions correctly, we will be finally ready to start asking God better questions. And God will answer us, he will. God will answer us with the name of his Son Jesus. Because when the Father gave us his Son Jesus, he already has given us everything.