News



New York Cardinal Timothy Dolan celebrates Easter Mass at St. Patrick's Cathedral April 12 during the coronavirus pandemic. (CNS/Reuters/Jeenah Moon)



Mark Pattison

View Author Profile

Catholic News Service

View Author Profile

Join the Conversation

Send your thoughts to *Letters to the Editor*. Learn more

Washington — April 13, 2020
Share on BlueskyShare on FacebookShare on TwitterEmail to a friendPrint

Appearing on the CBS newsmagazine "60 Minutes," Cardinal Timothy Dolan of New York said faith is key, even as people are in isolation from others as a result of the stay-at-home orders imposed to slow a worsening of the coronavirus pandemic.

"Just as you have faith that the person you love is still enjoying eternal life and is still with you, so our faith needs to kick in that even if we can't be next to Mom and Dad or Grandma and Grandpa and even if we can't embrace the family at a time of mourning, our faith tells us we're still united. We're still together," Dolan said in the "60 Minutes" installment that aired on Easter, April 12.

"Faith, of course, doesn't depend on things physical. And we have faith these days that even though we can't sadly get to the synagogue or to our parish churches, we can still be in union with God through prayer, through sincerity, through earnestness, through charity to others," the cardinal said in the interview, a transcript of which was provided by CBS News.

"And, thanks be to God, so many are using the technological advances that we have, livestreaming, radio, TV, you name it. People are -- are plugging in it, at overwhelming numbers to be part of a community at Easter."

Dolan, interviewed by "60 Minutes" correspondent Margaret Brennan, said he has told those in mourning over COVID-19 deaths that "your grief is complicated because not only have you lost someone you cherish, you were even unable to be next to them in their last moments. And you're unable even to, to mourn and cry and hug one another here at graveside."

He added, "This is an extended, enhanced, deepened sense of grief, which I hope whenever we got that loss, whenever we got that emptiness, you know, who wants to fill it: God. So I'm hoping it's an invitation from him that as we're empty, he will fill."

Advertisement

Asked by Brennan what Pope Francis meant in a recent interview when he said that the time of coronavirus is "a time for integrity," Dolan replied, in part: "When things come together and when that flows out to the way we love and treat other people, as we see so radiantly all over in our health care workers and our first responders and in neighbors who are looking out for one another, shopping, checking on one another. I think we've got an integrity, a connectiveness, a unity of purpose. And I am rather confident that's what Pope Francis meant."

As for the reopening of churches, Dolan said, "God gave us common sense, and God told us we have to pay attention to the common good. The decision that I would make about opening our churches and please God it's as soon as can be, is that we have to listen to the experts."

He added, "God gave us a brain. And part of the way he answers prayers is in the direction, the guidance, the illumination that we get from other people. ... And that's what I say to God's people who today are really missing (church) -- they want to get in the car and drive around until they find a church open. God is telling us use your brain. Use your prudence. Use your common sense. Don't tempt the Lord."