SEARCH185

CREATING PEACE IN YOUR FAMILY

GOD'S PLAN OF LIFE AND LOVE

Welcome to Search 185 where we discuss life's biggest questions and look for answers to live by . . .

You've seen the news that Pope Francis died on the Monday after Easter. Can you explain to us what is going to happen next . . .?

The Pope is our spiritual father, like Paul calls himself in 1 Cor 4:15, and we are the family of God. A family needs a good father, just like our spiritual family needs a good spiritual father. Pope Francis has been in office since March 2013. (12 years)

After the pope has died, the camerlengo, or chamberlain, must certify the death and seal the papal apartment. He runs administrative and financial duties of the Holy See until a new pope takes over. The largely ceremonial job of camerlengo is currently held by Cardinal Kevin Farrell, the Irish-born American head of the Vatican's laity office, who also announced the death on Monday morning.

What is the timing?

The death of a pope begins a precise sequence of events that include the confirmation of death in the pontiff's home, the transfer of the coffin to St. Peter's Basilica for public viewing, a funeral Mass and burial. Interment must take place between the fourth and sixth day after his death.

After the funeral, there are nine days of official mourning, known as the "novendiali."

During this period, the cardinals arrive in Rome. To give everyone time to assemble, the conclave must begin 15-20 days after the "sede vacante" is declared, although it can start sooner if the cardinals agree.

Who can elect a Pope?

Only cardinals under age 80 are eligible to vote. Current regulations notionally limit the number of electors to 120, but popes have often exceeded that ceiling. According to the most recently updated Vatican statistics, there were 135 cardinals under age 80 and eligible to vote. Cardinals over age 80 can be elected pope.

Those over 80 can't vote but can participate in pre-conclave meetings, known as general congregations, in which church problems are discussed.

Who are possible candidates?

Any baptized Roman Catholic male is eligible to be pope, but since 1378, only cardinals have been selected. Cardinals who are considered possible candidates to be pope are often referred to as "papabili" or able to be pope. Who these contenders may be is, of course, entirely speculative because the conclave process is not a public contest.

How are the votes taken?

A first ballot is held in the Sistine Chapel on the afternoon

after the initial Mass. If no pope is elected, over the ensuing days two ballots are held each morning and two each afternoon.

The ballots are rectangular pieces of paper with the words: "Eligo in Summum Pontificem" ("I elect as supreme pontiff") written on top, with a space for a name. Each cardinal makes his choice, folds the paper in half, walks to the front of the chapel and declares: "I call as my witness Christ the Lord, who will be my judge, that my vote is given to the one who before God I think should be elected."

He then puts the ballot on a tray and tips it into a receptacle.

Three designated cardinals, known as scrutineers, check each ballot to see if it is filled out correctly. Each name is read aloud and counted, with the results announced to the conclave after each round.

If no one gets the needed two-thirds of votes, the ballots are pierced with a needle and thread, which is then knotted and placed on a tray, and another round of voting is prepared.

How Do we Know if a pope is elected?

After the ballots are pierced, they are burned in a stove at the end of the voting session. Black smoke from the Sistine Chapel chimney means no decision; white smoke signals the cardinals have chosen a pope and that he has accepted.

Chemical cartridges are added to ensure there is no confusion over the color. To produce black smoke, a cartridge containing potassium perchlorate, anthracene — the component of coal tar — and sulfur is burned with the ballots. For white smoke, a cartridge of potassium chlorate, lactose and chloroform resin is burned with the ballots.

Bells also are rung to signal the election of a pope, for further clarity.

The new pope is introduced from the balcony overlooking St. Peter's Square with the words, "Habemus Papam!" ("We have a pope!") and his chosen papal name. The new pope then emerges and gives his first blessing.

Henry, there has been much turmoil in the family of God, the Church, over the last couple of decades. We need peace in our Church family, but more importantly, today, I would like to talk about creating peace in our immediate families. . .

What does Peace look like in a family?

I will begin to explain it by telling you what peace in a family is not …

Peace is not…

1. Stillness
2. Quiet
3. Absence of chaos or disagreements
4. Absence of suffering, or
5. Absence of sadness (Teresa)

[Avila story]

What we are about to discuss does not apply to everyone equally. Take the advice that applies to you and your situation and ignore the rest.

The first principle we must understand is that . . .

- We were created for God. Our very being yearns for the perfection that was our initial destiny.
- Our final goal is to reach heaven and be with God for all eternity. Therefore, everything God does or allows is oriented toward that goal because of His love for us. Do we truly understand and believe that? Are we willing to

submit to God’s plan of molding us into faithful, holy sons and daughters of God?

- Nothing, whatsoever, is done in the world apart from the will of God. God sustains all of creation through his Divine Will. We must surrender to His will in our daily lives. What you are going through right now is His Will. Embrace it with total TRUST, total FAITH that God loves you and will get you through the fires you are experiencing.

*Peace is a choice of the will to conform our wills to His. It is a heart that says, “Thy will be done.”

What are some of the reasons we don’t have peace in our families?

- Sin - the failure to live according to our design.
    - We were made to love and to be loved. This is the meaning of life. Thomas A’Kempis said, “Nothing but holiness of life will set your mind at rest, nothing but a good conscience will help you to face God unashamed.”
- Pride - the root of all the vices such as greed, lust, impatience, anger and laziness. Pride says, “I don't need to

change. I am fine the way I am. I am not a bad sinner." Pride makes excuses for our failings or lack of goodness.

- Selfishness - opposes Love. Love is putting the needs of the other before our needs. Being selfish puts us first, not 3rd.
- Being ungrateful – We can be so ungrateful. We complain so much about what we don't have and forget to be thankful for what we do have. (e.g. house, work, health, love, etc.)
- Fear - The fear of losing "things" of this world (job, money, loved-ones) - "do not worry" (Mt 6:25-27). St. Augustine could not figure out how to have peace in his heart until he realized it was because all he cared about could be taken from him. It wasn't until he held on to that one thing that NO ONE could take from him that his restless heart found its peace.
    - "You have made us for yourself, O Lord, and our heart is restless until it rests in you."
    - Phil 4:6 Have no anxiety at all, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, make your requests known to God. Then the peace of God that surpasses all understanding will guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus. - It is this anxiety and fear that fuels our mistrust in God.

- Lack of trust - Faith the size of a mustard seed can move mountains. Heb 10:22 “let us approach with a sincere heart and in absolute trust, with our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed in pure water.” Adam and Eve lost trust in their creator and believed the enemy in that God could not be trusted – “Did God say you would die . . . you will not die.”
- Lack of perseverance - in the face of trouble we abandon our efforts and flee to our comforts. “Whoever perseveres to the end will be saved.” (Mt 24:13) St. Paul says, “My grace is sufficient for thee, for my power is made perfect in weakness.” (2 Cor 12:9)
- Lack of Kind and Compassionate WORDS – Most are men of few words. Say good things to your wife. Be good to you wife. Make a list of good comments and actions that you can perform, one for each day. They don’t have to be big ticket items, just a simple, “you look especially pretty today.” “I like your hair like that.”

What are some practical ways to create peace in our families?

Protector and provider priest

Example of expiation (self-sacrifice)

Affectionate authority

Courageous and content communicator

Ephesians 5 husband

- Protector. Our job as husbands and fathers are to protect what God has entrusted to us – the life and souls of your family.
    - Adam failed to “keep” or protect (Heb. shamar) the garden and his wife from the infiltration of the serpent and death followed. (Dragon with 7 heads, Rev 12)
    - You and I are called to be a “new Adam,” like Christ and not fail to protect what has been entrusted to you – your garden (home) and your bride.
- Provider. You must provide for the spiritual as well as the physical needs for your family. Begin with your spouse, then the children.
    - Learn your faith, Love your faith and Live your faith.

- Priest and Prayer Warrior. Bless you children. Fathers lay hands of blessing upon them, your hands contain power. Use holy water when you bless them.
    - You are the first father your child will know and you will influence how they see their heavenly Father. Your home is a domestic church.
    - Pray for your wife and children – their lives depend on it! Both physically and spiritually. Pray for at least 30 minutes per day. Teach them how to pray.
    - Your responsibility is to give them the tools and knowledge to get to heaven. Everything else is secondary. Give them the Sacraments of Grace, especially confession and the Eucharist.
    - St. Peter tells us, “Be holy yourselves in all your conduct since it is written, ‘You shall be holy as I am holy.’ ” (1 Pt 1:15-16)

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- Be the Pattern the example. Fathers - You are the KEY.
    - Spend individual quality time with your children. Our society is in such disarray because of the lack of good fathers! - we have a crisis of fatherhood.
    - Teach your family to serve by being a servant King like Jesus. Jesus said he came to serve, not to be served. They will learn from you . . . good and bad.

- Expiation. Dying to self – We are to become a sacrifice . . . we must carry our cross daily (Luke 9:23 - “If anyone wishes to come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me.”) We must put the needs of our families before our needs. Our spouses first, then the children.
    - It requires a conversion of heart . . . to the heart of Christ. Only then can we love like Christ.
    - Have you ever wondered why a bride groom is usually depicted in a BLACK suite? It is the same reason a priest wears black since he is the Church’s bride groom. Black signifies DEATH. It represents a “dying to self” - dying our own needs, our wants and desires and living for the needs and desires of the “other.”
    - Husbands, this is what God wants from you . . . to love your wife. How much? (Story of the movie Titanic -

    1997) Women want a husband that will fill that need in their heart. Their hearts yearn for a man they know is willing to lay down his life for his bride. Give everything up for her - his time, money, comfort and leisure, his very self - none of these belong to us - they belong to God.
    - Men think “weakness” when they hear these words. The irony is that St. Paul says that when are weak, we

are strong. When we have nothing in this world that is ours, we gain everything.

- 2 Cor 12:10 Therefore, I am content with weaknesses, insults, hardships, persecutions, and constraints, for the sake of Christ; for when I am weak, then I am strong.
- Your homework is that tonight is to ask your wife, “What is the hardest part of your day?” Don’t try to solve the problem yet, just listen and ask what you can do.
- In general, sacrifice = success. If you want your home life to have peace, you as a husband, must pay the price of self-sacrifice, daily.

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- Affectionate/Loving. You must show affection to your spouse AND your children.
  - Hug them. Look them in the eye and TELL them you love them. Don’t assume that “they know” you love them.
  - My dad grew up with little affection from his father. He swore that he would show his love for us by his actions and words . . .
- Authority, Structure and Discipline:
  - Mt 20:25-28 Jesus called them to him and said, “You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great men exercise authority over them. It

shall not be so among you; but whoever would be great among you must be your servant, and whoever would be first among you must be your slave; even as the Son of man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many."

- This authority needs to be firm but loving. Your children need to know there are consequences when we don't do what we are supposed to do. (tell the truth, be obedient, don't be rebellious)

> **Heb 12:10-11** *but he disciplines us for our good, that we may share his holiness. For the moment all discipline seems painful rather than pleasant; later it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it.*

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- Courage to conform to God's will - trusting God with the small trials befall us. God will send small trials in our lives so that we will be able to handle greater ones.
- Be Pleased with what you have. Being content. Being thankful - . . . (see story at the end)
- Communicate with your wife and kids. Talk to them about what goes on in your life and ask them about theirs. Don't isolate yourself.
    - When disagreements arise, say, "I feel like . . ." and then state what you are feeling. Avoid the word,

“you.” (e.g. I feel that I am not appreciated for what I do for the family”)

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- Partner. Husbands - love your wife! Take her on dates - Watch a show together and massage her shoulders - she deserves it! Tell her she is beautiful and that you appreciate all that she does for the family. You may say, “But . . . I don’t have time for that” . . . make time! Also, give her some time for herself.
    - Eph 5:25-29 Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ loved the church and handed himself over for her to sanctify her . . . that she might be holy . . . He who loves his wife loves himself. For no one hates his own flesh but rather nourishes and cherishes it, even as Christ does the church. . .
    - Husbands, LOVE your wife as Christ loved the Church. . . She is the QUEEN of your home as much as you are KING of the same home.
    - Authentic love is putting the needs of the “other” before yours. It is self-sacrificing . . . it looks like this (crucifix). Christ tells us that we must carry our cross daily if we want to be his disciple.
    - Colossians 3:23-25 Whatever your task, work heartily, as serving the Lord and not men, knowing that from the Lord you will receive the inheritance as your reward; you are serving the Lord Christ. For the wrongdoer will

be paid back for the wrong he has done, and there is no partiality.

In summary . . .

• Love of God and love of neighbor. (Matthew 22: 37 ; 1 Corinthians 13: 1 – 13)

The answer is simple, but not EASY. How do we deal with all the difficulties and live a peaceful life? By conforming our will to the will of God. Surrender to God every moment of your life to Him.

There was once a theologian who prayed to God for 8 years to show him a man that could teach him the most direct way to heaven. God told him to go to the Church and he would find the man he seeks. He went to the Church and saw a poor beggar covered with sores at the entrance of the Church and said, “good day.” The beggar responded, “I do not remember ever having a bad one.” “Well then, God send you good fortune,” said the theologian. “But I never had any bad fortune,” answered the beggar. The man of letters was astonished at this reply, but he repeated his wish saying “I pray that you may be happy.” “I was never unhappy. I have nothing to complain about. I am perfectly content with what God has assigned me in this world. If I suffer hunger, I praise my heavenly father for it. If the cold pinches me, if the rain pours down upon me, or if the sky inflicts upon me any other injury, I praise God just the same. For I am sure that God is the author of all these things and that whatever God does must be the best. Whatever God gives or allows to happen whether pleasant or unpleasant, I joyfully receive as from the hand of a most loving father. And this one thing I will: what God wills . . . and so all things happen as I will. I am so thoroughly content with my lot that I would not change it for the riches of all kings.” [Heliotropium, Jeremias Drexelius]

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"It was a deliberate choice, I chose, consciously and willingly, to abandon myself to God's will, to let go completely of every last reservation...Across that threshold I had been afraid to cross, things suddenly seemed so very simple. There was but a single vision, God, who was all in all; there was but one will that directed all things, God's will. I had only to see it, to discern it in every circumstance in which I found myself, and let myself be ruled by it. God is in all things, sustains all things, directs all things. To discern this in every

situation and circumstance, to see his will in all things, was to accept each circumstance and situation and let oneself be borne along in perfect confidence and trust. Nothing could separate me from him, because he was in all things. No danger could threaten me, no fear could shake me, except the fear of losing sight of him. The future, hidden as it was, was hidden in his will and therefore acceptable to me no matter what it might bring. The past, with all its failures, was not forgotten; it remained to remind me of the weakness of human nature and the folly of putting any faith in self. But it no longer depressed me. I looked no longer to self to guide me, relied on it no longer in any way, so it could not again fail me. By renouncing, finally and completely, all control of my life and future destiny...I was freed thereby from anxiety and worry, from every tension, and could float serenely upon the tide of God's sustaining providence in peace."

--Father Walter J. Ciszek [20 years in Russian prisons]

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