Devotional for Day 41, Monday, November 4
Fr. Frank Pavone, National Director, Priests for Life

Intention:

Pray that the witness of 40 Days for Life bears abundant fruit, and that we begin again each day to storm the gates of hell until God welcomes us into the gates of heaven.

Scripture:

He will wipe every tear from their eyes. On this rock I will build my church; the gates of hell will not prevail against it.

— *Matthew 16:18*

Reflection:

When we read this verse, we usually think that the Lord is promising that the church, which is His Body, will withstand all the attacks launched against it.

Of course, that is true. But when we think about it more carefully, we realize that in a battle, the gates do not run out into the battlefield to attack the enemy. Rather, they stand still to defend the city from the enemy attacking it.

So when the Lord says that the gates of hell will not prevail against the church, who is doing the attacking?

It is the church storming the gates!

The church, all of God's people in Christ, is called to take the offensive, to run into enemy territory, and to gain ground for Jesus Christ. We do not wait for an invitation; we already have a command.

We prepare, but we do not wait for circumstances to be perfect; we already have one who has gone before us.

During these 40 days, we have stormed the gates. We have taken the offensive.

We have pushed forward the boundaries of the kingdom. And we must keep doing so, in numerous ways.

Indeed, the gates of hell will not prevail. The gates of falsehood will flee in the presence of truth. The gates of sin will melt in the presence of grace. The gates of death will fall in the presence of the church, the People of Life!

Prayer:

Father, we praise you. We have heard the voice of your Son, and therefore we can make our voices heard.

We have done battle with the power of evil, and therefore we can have compassion on those still within its grip. We have been freed from the kingdom of darkness, and therefore we can bear witness to your Kingdom of Light.

May the witness of all your people through these 40 Days for Life bear abundant fruit, and may we begin again each day to storm the gates of hell until You welcome us into the gates of heaven.

We pray in the victorious name of Jesus Christ our Lord, amen.

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