

MAY JESUS CHRIST BE PRAISED

FEBRUARY 19, 2017

SPIRITUAL PONDERINGS

PRAYER Part III

Let us begin today's reflection with the simple idea of praising God for the fact that he desires to be with us and wants to talk to us.

5. Heart of the Matter

One day I was watching a documentary on the Navy Seals and as a part of this documentary the announcer explained that navy seals were first developed in a response to a problem. As the

navy fought the Japanese in the South Pacific it found itself going from one

island to the next island. Navy leaders would send airplanes to these islands to get a good view of the land and the different beaches and coves. There was a problem however the pilots and other crewmen could not see the dangerously sharp coral reefs underneath the surface of the ocean and so many of the landing boats would be ripped to shreds by this unseen danger. In response to this navy swimmers began to form groups of underwater swimmers and it was their job to map the underwater coral dangers for the navy and in the process, save lives and material. In Europe, these divers were also given the task of blowing up the underwater obstacles that the Germans had placed along the coast of France.

Prayer needs to be more than surface level

Sometimes in our prayer life, I think many of us stay on the surface level and pretend that everything is just fine. The following is one of my favorite prayers:

So far today, God, I've done all right. I haven't gossiped, haven't lost my temper, haven't been greedy, grumpy, nasty, selfish, or over-indulgent. I'm really glad

about that. But in a few minutes, God, I'm going to

get out of bed and from then on, I'm probably going to need a lot more help. Thank you. In Jesus name, I pray. Amen

What I like about the above prayer so much is that it reminds me that prayer needs to be more than surface level. We need to be brave enough to look down deep in us to discover what it is that we really need to talk to God about. It is often these deep thoughts and patterns of thinking that are the real dangers like the coral reefs were to the navy ships.

In my own prayer life, I make it a point to speak to God about what is bothering me. If I am mad at Him, I let God know that I am mad. If I

Breaking Open The Word

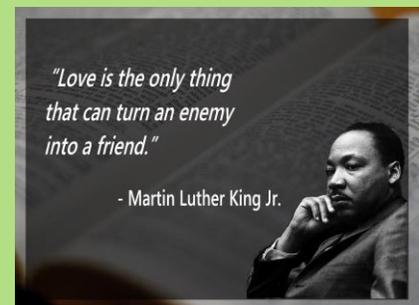
7TH Sun. Ordinary Time -

Lectionary: 79 Gospel MT 5:38-48

Spiritual Reflection: "Turning the Other Cheek" is no way a passive activity. "Turning the Other Cheek" is declaring that you will treat a person respect no matter how they treat you. It is about not allowing them to make you into a violent person.

Spiritual Questions

1. Why not an eye for eye?
2. Who do you find it toughest to love?
3. Why is love of enemy important to Jesus?
4. How is turning the other cheek not a sign of weakness?
5. How would your relationship with the person you struggle with the most change if you simply turned the other cheek?



am confused I am brave enough to admit that I don't know something. Finally, if I am disappointed or proud of myself, I let God know it to. There is no need to hold back from God. After all He is not going anywhere. He already knows what I have done but my experience of being able to tell Him what I have done and see Him not runaway strengthens my relationship with Him.

How would the world be different if Adam and Eve went to God and told him about the devil's insinuations and lies?

6. Persistence/Consistency

When I was growing up there were sometimes I was so focused on watching television that I would not notice when my grandmother had entered the room despite the fact that she was calling my name. My grandmother would walk up to me and place one of her hands over one of my ears. She would then say "Now that I know that what I want to say will not go in one ear and out the other ear anymore..."

She would then proceed to tell me what she had been trying to say. This memory of my grandmother came to mind when I started learning about consolation and desolation in the spiritual life. St. Ignatius of Loyola makes it very clear that God is always present in our lives. If he wasn't we would cease to exist. There are times though in which we know or feel his presence and there are times that He feels absent even though He is always present. St. Ignatius called the times that God feels present consolation and the times in which God feels absent desolation.

A mistake that many Catholics make is the assumption that consolation is the goal of our spiritual life but the real goal of the spiritual life is to learn God's will and to do it because God wants what is best for us. While God does not cause desolation, God can speak to us through desolation according to St. Ignatius.

According to St. Ignatius God allows desolation for one of three reasons. The first reason is

that God respects our freewill. If we are not praying, He will not force himself on us. The second reason is that God wants to make sure that we are praying to be in a relationship with Him and not just to get good feelings. Finally, God allows desolation to remind us that He cannot be controlled or manipulated and therefore even when we do everything right God may withhold His presence so that we realize that He is in charge and we are not.

No matter what reason God allows us to go through a period of desolation the important message is that we need to remain consistent and persevere in prayer. Like an athlete training for a race, we must persevere in prayer even when we do not feel like it as the athlete preserves in running even when he or she does not feel like it. St. Ignatius goes so far to say if you normally pray for fifteen minutes a day and now don't feel like praying, you should then pray for sixteen minutes a day. This is important because it is the devil that desires you to stop praying.

PRAYER OF THE WEEK

Meal Prayers

Growing up a priest once told me that the prayer that many of us pray before meals was written by St. Polycarp whose feast we celebrate on February 23rd. Therefore, I thought I would offer you some different meal prayers

Original Meal Prayer attributed to St. Polycarp.

Bless us, Oh Lord Bless us, Oh Lord, and these thy gifts, which we are about to receive, from thy bounty, through Christ, Our Lord. Amen.

Meal Prayer

In a world where so many are hungry, may we eat this food with humble hearts; in a world where so many are lonely, May we share this friendship with joyful hearts.

Meal Prayer

Bless us, O God. Bless our food and our drink. Since you redeemed us so dearly and delivered us from evil, as you gave us a share in this

food so may you give us a share in eternal life.

Meal Prayer

Blessed are you, Lord our God, maker of heaven and earth and Father of all your people: we give you glory for your goodness and for your loving care for us. Bless + this food [this bread] and grant that all who eat it may be strong in body and grow in your love. Blessed are

you, Lord our God, for ever and ever Amen.

Meal Prayer

Blessed are you, Lord God, king of the universe: you raised your beloved Son from the dead, and made him Lord of all. We turn to you in prayer and ask you to bless us and this food you have given us. Help us to be generous toward others, and to work with them so that they too may eat well. Loving Father, may we all celebrate together around your table in heaven. We praise you and give you glory through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Meal Prayer

Loving Father, we thank you for bringing us together for this meal: may we continue to live in your friendship and in harmony with one another. Bless this food, a sign of your loving care for us, and bless us

in our daily lives. Bless your Church throughout the world, and all those who seek to do your will today. Father of mercy, all praise be to you through Jesus Christ our Savior, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

Meal Prayer

Lord God and Giver of All Good Gifts, we are grateful as we pause before this meal, for all the blessings of life that You give to us. Daily, we are fed with good things, nourished by friendship and care, feasted with forgiveness and understanding. And so, mindful of Your continuous care, we pause to be grateful for the blessings of this table. *Pause for silent reflection.* May Your presence be the "extra" taste to this meal which we eat in the name of Your Son, Jesus. Amen.

CATHOLIC TRIVIA

Last Week Answers: True or False

1. Baptism is required to receive the other Sacraments. TRUE
2. Anyone can Baptize in case of an emergency if they intend to do what the Church means by Baptism. TRUE
3. The word "Christ" means "Son of David" FALSE (Means "anointed one")
4. The word "Eucharist" means "Thanksgiving". TRUE

Match the Saint with his quote

1. ___ If you are what you should be, you will set the whole world ablaze!
2. ___ This is the very perfection of a man, to find out his own imperfections.
3. ___ To live is to change, and to be perfect is to have changed often.
4. ___ He who climbs never stops going from beginning to beginning, through beginnings that have no end. He never stops desiring what he already knows.
5. ___ Let us begin in earnest to work out our salvation, for no one will do it for us, since even He Himself, Who made us without ourselves, will not save us without ourselves.

- A) St. Margaret Mary Alacoque
C) St. Gregory of Nissa
E) St. Catherine of Sienna

- B) Bl. John Newman
D) St. Augustine

Spiritual Adoption

Spiritual Adoption 1-2 Month

I am asking you to spiritual adopt a child who is in danger of being aborted by praying the following prayer every day for the child.

"Jesus, Mary and Joseph, I love you very much. I beg you to spare the life of [baby's name] the unborn baby that I have spiritually adopted who is in danger of abortion." - Prayer of Archbishop Fulton J. Sheen.

You can also keep track of your spiritual baby's progress by checking out the informational articles below each month.

1 Month since Conception –Developing Baby "My heart is beating!"

Your spiritually adopted baby has been quite active over the past month. Already your baby is 10,000 times bigger than at conception. Your baby has developed the foundations of his brain, spinal cord, and nervous system by the 20th day. His heart began to beat on the 21st day, pumping blood through its own circulatory system and the blood type can be different from his mother's. Your baby is most vulnerable during the next month of being aborted. Pray that the Lord of Life might move the heart of his mother to give him the most precious gift of all -- the gift of life.

CATHOLIC HUMOR

Catholic Laughs

A church's bell ringer passed away. The church posted the job opening in the local newspaper's classified ads and a man came in with no arms wanting the job. The clergy weren't sure he could do it, but he convinced them to let him try it. They climbed the bell tower and the guy ran toward the bell and hit it with his head, producing a beautiful melody. They gave him the job on the spot. The next day he went to ring the bell, tripped, bounced off the bell and fell to the sidewalk below. Two priests were walking past. One asked, "Do you know this guy?" The other responded, "No, but his face rings a bell." The next day, the dead man's twin brother came in for the again vacant bell ringer position. He also had no arms. The clergy led him up to the bell tower, where he ran at the bell, tripped and fell to the sidewalk below. The same two priests walked up. The first asked, "Do you know him?" The second responded, "No, but he's a dead ringer for his brother."



CATHOLIC QUOTES

Eighty and six years have I served Christ, nor has He ever done me any harm. How, then, could I blaspheme my King who saved Me?...I bless Thee for deigning me worthy of this day and this hour that I may be among Thy martyrs and drink the cup of my Lord Jesus Christ. – St. Polycarp

Now may the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the eternal high priest himself, the Son of God Jesus Christ, build you up in faith and truth and in all gentleness and in all freedom from anger and forbearance and steadfastness and patient endurance and purity. – St. Polycarp

Special Lenten Holy Hour

I am also excited to announce that we will be having a special Holy Hour each Sunday of Lent at Epiphany from 6PM-7PM. These Holy Hours will carry with them a special reflection on the Seven Last Words of Christ. Please see the schedule below.

<u>Sunday</u>	<u>Words of Christ</u>	<u>Meditation</u>
March 5th	Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they do. – Luke 23:34	Fr. Michael Rennie
March 12th	Truly, I say to you, today you will be with me in paradise. – Luke 23:43	Fr. Bill Kempf
March 19th	Woman, behold your son, Son behold your mother. – John 19:26-27	Msgr. Gregory Mikesch
March 26th	My God, My God, why have you forsaken me? – Matthew 27:46	Fr. Ralph Houlihan S. J.
April 2nd	I thirst -John 19:28	Fr. Tom Miller
April 9th	It is finished. - John 19:30 Father into your hands I commit my spirit -Luke 23:46	Msgr. John Borcic