

# MAY JESUS CHRIST BE PRAISED

MAY 07, 2017

## SPIRITUAL PONDERINGS

### 15<sup>th</sup> Diseases of Leadership

When Jesus went into the region of Caesarea Philippi\* he asked his disciples, "Who do people say that the Son of Man is?" They replied, "Some say John the Baptist, others Elijah, still others Jeremiah or one of the prophets." He said to them, "But who do you say that I am?" Simon Peter said in reply, "You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God." Jesus said to him in reply, "Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah. For flesh and blood\* has not revealed this to you, but my heavenly Father. And so I say to you, you are Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church, and the gates of the netherworld shall not prevail against it. I will give you the keys to the kingdom of heaven.

Whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven; and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven." Then he strictly ordered his disciples to tell no one that he was the Messiah. From that time on, Jesus began to show his disciples that he must go to Jerusalem and suffer greatly from the elders, the chief priests, and the scribes, and be killed and on the third day be raised. Then Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him, "God forbid, Lord! No such thing shall ever happen to you." He turned and said to Peter, "Get behind me, Satan! You are an obstacle to me. You are thinking

not as God does, but as human beings do." (Mathew 16:13:23)

The above passage from the Gospel of Mathew demonstrates that from the very beginning that leaders in our Church have a need to constantly examine their leadership decisions to make sure that they are in keeping with God's will. A couple of years ago, Pope Francis came out with a list of what he called "diseases of leadership." I would to reflect with you this month on these diseases so that we may all become better Christian leaders. The diseases will be in bold and my reflections will be in regular font.

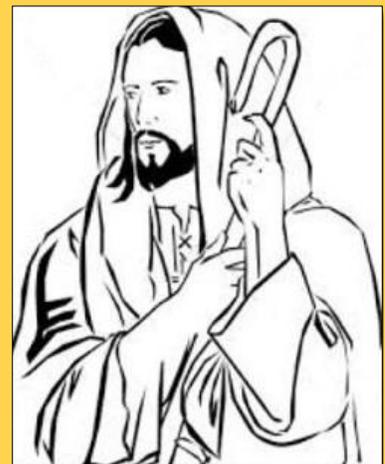
**1. THE DISEASE OF THINKING WE ARE IMMORTAL, IMMUNE, OR DOWNRIGHT INDISPENSABLE, [and therefore] neglecting the need for regular check-ups. A leadership team which is not self-critical, which does not keep up with things, which does not seek to be more fit, is a sick body. A simple visit to the cemetery might help us see the names of many people who thought they were immortal, immune, and indispensable! It is the disease of those who turn into lords and masters, who think of themselves as above**

**4<sup>th</sup> Sun. Easter Lectionary:  
49 Gospel JN 10:1-10**

**Spiritual Reflection:** Jesus came "so that they/we might have life and have it more abundantly." St. Irenaeus of Lyon is often quoted as saying: "The glory of God is a person fully alive!"

### Spiritual Questions

1. Do we truly believe Jesus wants us to live life to the fullest?
2. How do drugs, alcohol, lustful sex, etc. prevent us from living life to the full?
3. How does Jesus' life back up His words?
4. How can you get better at knowing the Shepherd's voice?
5. Who are some of the thieves in the world today?



others and not at their service. It is the pathology of power and comes from a superiority complex, from a narcissism which passionately gazes at its own image and does not see the face of others, especially the weakest and those most in need. The antidote to this plague is humility; to say heartily, "I am merely a servant. I have only done what was my duty."

As I reflected upon this disease of leadership, I remembered this quote from Abraham Lincoln: "Sir, my concern is not whether God is on our side; my greatest concern is to be on God's side, for God is always right." It is important to remember that ultimately, we are not the ones in charge and we must make a report to God not only for our sins but also for how we used our gifts and talents.

**2. ANOTHER DISEASE IS EXCESSIVE BUSYNESS.** It is found in those who immerse themselves in work and inevitably neglect to "rest a while." Neglecting needed rest leads to stress and agitation. A time of rest, for those who have

completed their work, is necessary, obligatory and should be taken seriously: by spending time with one's family and respecting holidays as moments for recharging.

This disease of leadership made me think about the following quote from Mother Teresa: "At the end of life we will not be judged by how many diplomas we have received, how much money we have made, how many great things we have done. We will be judged by 'I was hungry, and you gave me something to eat, I was naked and you clothed me. I was homeless, and you took me in.'"

The idea that relationships are more important than being busy also separates us from Communism. Cardinal Van Thuan who suffered greatly under Communism in Vietnam pointed out in his writings how Communists concern themselves only with the body of a person and took no time to help or care for the soul of a person.

**3. THEN THERE IS THE DISEASE OF MENTAL AND [EMOTIONAL] "PETRIFICATION."**

It is found in leaders who have a heart of stone, the "stiff-necked;" in those who in the course of time lose their interior serenity, alertness and daring, and hide under a pile of papers, turning into paper pushers and not men and women of compassion. It is dangerous to lose the human sensitivity that enables us to weep with those who weep and to rejoice with those who rejoice! Because as time goes on, our hearts grow hard and become incapable of loving all those around us. Being a humane leader means having the sentiments of humility and unselfishness, of detachment and generosity.

Catholics are always called to see positions of leadership as opportunities to serve others and to make the world a better place. We must also realize that no one should be treated as a cog in a machine or as an economic agent for good or for bad. We should treat each person as we would Christ.

## PRAYER OF THE WEEK

### Prayers To the Good Shepherd

#### PRAYER TO JESUS THE GOOD SHEPHERD.

Faithful Shepherd,  
You are not a hireling who runs away at the sight of danger, but Your fidelity was tested and proven on the wood of the Cross. Accept the gift of our gratitude for Your marvelous care. Help us to hear and follow Your voice. Watchful Shepherd, who protects the flock

and searches tirelessly for those who wander from the fold, retrieve the lost and bring them home. Tend and heal their wounds. Good Shepherd, who lays down His Life for His sheep, nourish Your people with the Bread of Life, that we may reflect Your likeness and enjoy the spring of Living Water that never ends. Amen.



**THE LITANY OF THE GOOD SHEPHERD.**

God the Father of the Lamb, have mercy on us.  
 God the Son, Sacrificial Lamb, have mercy on us.  
 God the Holy Spirit, Life of the Lamb, have mercy on us.  
 O Good Jesus, Shepherd of the just, hear us.  
 Vigilant Finder of lost sheep, guide us.  
 Fervent Hope of the fallen lamb, guide us.  
 Constant Gatherer of a broken flock,

guide us.  
 O Good Shepherd, hear Thy sheep.  
 Purest shelter of the yearning heart, feed us.  
 Perpetual Feast of the hungry soul, feed us.  
 Lasting Bread of perfect Life, feed us.  
 O Good Shepherd, hear Thy sheep.  
 Patient Tamer of rebellious wills, shear us.  
 Loyal Teacher of all kind commands, shear us.  
 Tender Purger of all blemish of sin, shear us.  
 O Good Shepherd, hear Thy sheep.

From the lures of false shepherds hiding in Thy guise, protect us.  
 From mirages of richer fields, conquering our minds, protect us.  
 From diseases of the soul, separating us from Thy flock, protect us.  
 O Good Shepherd, at once the Guard and Lamb, Who knows well the sheep He leads, Guide us, feed us, shear us, and bid us come unto Thee, delighting in Thy Heavenly pasture, and praising Thee forever and ever. Amen.

**Catholic Quiz**

Last Week's Answers

1. What is the first prayer said when praying the Rosary? Apostles Creed
2. What is the Catholic term describing a place of purification after bodily death but before the soul enters into heaven? Purgatory
3. What was the name of the Church Council before Vatican I? Council of Trent
4. What is the title of the bishop (sometimes archbishop) who acts as the pope's ambassador to a country? Apostolic Nuncio

This Week's Questions



**CATHOLIC HUMOR**

Catholic Laughs

Jesus, Moses, and an old man go golfing. The first one to tee off is Moses. He smashes the ball and it is heading right for the water hazard before the green. Moses raises his club, the water parts, and the ball makes it to the green. Jesus gets up to swing, cranks it

**Epiphany of Our Lord Cow Patty Bingo**



Epiphany is hosting its first ever Cow Patty Bingo on Saturday June 3<sup>rd</sup> from 2PM – 9PM.

**Cow Patty Bingo Basics:**

1. Msgr. Sullivan field has been divided into 500 5ftx5ft squares.
2. Each square will randomly receive a number 1 through 500. (So #1 will not necessarily be a corner)
3. You may purchase a square for \$20.
4. Squares are assigned randomly.
5. If the Cow drops her patty on your square you win \$2,000

\*See [www.epiphanystl.org](http://www.epiphanystl.org) for more info, official rules, and to purchase your squares

out, and it is headed for the water hazard. Jesus closes his eyes and prays. The ball skips across the water and lands on the green two feet from the hole. The old man's turn comes and he drives the ball. The ball looks like it is going to drop directly into the water. A fish jumps from the water hazard swallowing the ball, as an eagle drops from the sky, grabbing the fish. As the eagle flies over the green, a bolt of lightning strikes the eagle, making it drop the fish. As the fish hits the green, it spits out the ball and the ball falls into the hole, making a hole in one. Jesus looks at Moses and says, "I really think I'm leaving Dad at home next time!"

## CATHOLIC QUOTES

"If this is the way You treat Your friends, no wonder You have so few!" -St. Teresa of Avila

"Give something, however small, to the one in need. For it is not small to one who has nothing. Neither is it small to God, if we have given what we could." -St. Gregory Nazianzen

"Christ be with me, Christ within me, Christ behind me, Christ before me, Christ beside me, Christ to win me, Christ to comfort me and restore me, Christ beneath me, Christ above me, Christ in quiet, Christ in danger, Christ in hearts of all that love me, Christ in mouth of friend and stranger." -St. Patrick

"Christ said, "I am the Truth"; he did not say "I am the custom." -St. Toribio

"All the efforts of the human mind cannot exhaust the essence of a single fly." -St. Thomas Aquinas



**"Fundraising is proclaiming what we believe in such a way that we offer other people an opportunity to participate with us in our vision and mission."**

**– Fr. Henri Nouwen. (Spiritual Writer)**

I am grateful for those who have gone before us in this diocese who have helped developed all these different ways that we can help the poor, educate our youth, and build up the kingdom of God – Fr. Pastorius

### Spiritual Adoption Prayer



"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

MONTH 4 -- Developing Baby -- "I had a dream!" Well, your little baby now weighs six ounces. She has fingernails and eyelashes. She has her own unique fingerprints, which will remain the same until she dies. Her taste buds are working. Her sense of hearing is developing and present at 14 weeks. There are no major developments anymore. At this month rapid eye movements (REMs) can be detected – a sign of dreaming. Your spiritually adopted baby is already well-formed, internally and externally. All she needs now is time to gain weight and grow strong. What a miracle she is! (Changes on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of Month)

