

MAY JESUS CHRIST BE PRAISED

July 9, 2017 – 14th Sunday Ordinary Time

SPIRITUAL PONDERINGS

Faith & Film

Let us spend sometime today reflecting on the movie: Rogue 1: A Star Wars Movie.

Rogue 1: A Star Wars Movie

There were once two scientists who were best of friends. The first was a man named Galen Erso and the second was a man named Orson Krennic. At some point, Galen Erso discovers or reasons that the scientific breakthroughs that he and his partner are working on can be used for great evil and so he takes his family and goes into hiding. Orson Krennic uses the research in order to advance in rank in the Empire. Krennic eventually tracks down his old friend and forces him to help complete building the Death Star. Erso helps build the weapon but includes a design flaw in it. He hopes he can get word about the defect to his daughter Jyn so that she can help the Rebel Alliance destroy his evil invention.

Cassian Andor learns of Galen's message and tracks down Jyn hoping that she will help him. In the process they put together a team that is comprised of Chirrut Imwe (a blind warrior) Baze Malbus (mercenary friend of Chirrut), Bohdi Rook (a former Empire Cargo Ship pilot) and other rebel outcasts. Together they successfully steal the plans to the Death Star and transmit

them to the rebels before they are all killed.

Spiritual Insight 1: Beware of Technology

Human beings have demonstrated a great capacity for scientific growth. Unfortunately, I am not sure if our ethical growth as a race has kept up. Just because we can do something does not mean we should do something. A

man may be able to physically beat up a child but he in no way should. In the same way, we human beings have advance far enough that we can create life in petri dishes but we shouldn't because whenever human beings create something we begin to implement quality controls. We have thousands of people literally locked away in refrigerators in small little prisons called petri-dishes. We have created drugs that give



us a temporary high feeling to help escape the present moment when we really should be facing these moments and learning, growing, and healing from them. Technology can be responsible for thousands of deaths just like the Death Star in the movies.

Spiritual Insight 2: Ambition and Competition can blind us
Orson Krennic's competition with Governor Tarkin renders him blind to the full

implications of the moral implications of his weapon are. He is only interested in gaining fame and power under this new regime. Sadly, Ambition and Competition can blind us today to the needs of others. Ambition and Competition also lead to a greater lack of respect for life. Others become either allies to help one advance or obstacles that must be overcome. This is why Krennic is able to kill Galen's wife without a second thought and still consider himself Galen's friend.

Cassian also suffers from a blind ambition in the movie. He is so set on defeating the Empire that he is willing to do anything and in the process he becomes able to kill another without a second thought. As he gets to know Jyn and teams with her, he begins to have a greater respect for life which is demonstrated by the fact that he refused to kill Galen when he had a chance.

Spiritual Insight 3: Trusting the Future

While Chirrut is not a Jedi he is able to sense the force and it allows him to fight despite being blind. Chirrut often speaks a mantra as he fights – “And I fear nothing. For all is as the Force wills it.” Chirrut does not fear death because he trusts that the Force will work things out for good. It would be nice if each of us trusted in the Holy Spirit the way that Chirrut trusts in the Force. Chirrut's saying made me think of this story about St. John Chrysostom found in Cardinal Francis Xavier Nguyen Van Thuan's book: *The Road of Hope: A Gospel from Prison*.

“You need to fear only one thing: sin.

When he was the patriarch of Constantinople, John Chrysostom incurred the wrath of the Byzantine court for his strong denunciation of sin in the Emperor's family. Various plans were suggested

as means or exacting revenge on the saint.

Plan A: Imprisonment. “But” court officials protested, “there he will have the opportunity to pray and suffer for the Lord as he has always desired.”

Plan B Banishment “But for him, everywhere is the Lord's country.”

Plan C Death. “But then we will satisfy his desire to be a martyr... None of these plans will cause him to suffer; on the contrary, he will joyfully accept them.

“No, there is only one thing John fears and hates above all else: sin. But it is impossible to force him to commit sin!”

If you fear sin only, no one will be stronger than you.”

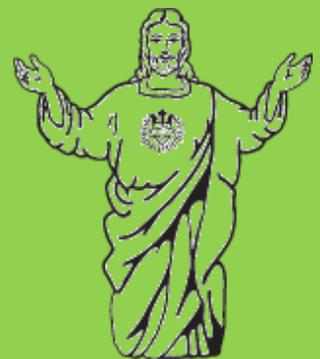
Breaking Open the Word

13th Sunday Ordinary Time Lectionary: 97 Gospel MT 10:37-42

Spiritual Reflection: Most problems in any relationship are caused by neglect and not malice.

Spiritual Questions:

1. How do you avoid neglecting others?
2. How can you avoid neglecting God?
3. Describe a time in which you felt hurt because of someone neglected you?
4. Describe a time in which you neglected someone but they thought you were being malicious?
5. What is a righteous man's award?



Special Guest Reflection

Flowers or weeds?

By Pamela Bruce

The life of a Catholic Christian is filled with amazing blessings, growth in suffering, and the awareness that this world is only temporary and we must live in a purposeful way. Knowing God and living with purpose is a tremendous freedom, but at times that knowledge can cause us to focus on everything that we are not doing right, everything we could be doing better, and every reason God should not forgive our many sins.

I have found in talking with many faithful people, and myself, that sometimes our minds start to focus on the sins and missteps we have made and we forget the times when we have done exactly as God has wanted us to do.

Recently, while I was on retreat, I was taking in the beautiful scenery. Blue sky, a slow-moving river, and colorful flower beds that filled the grounds. Everything was simply beautiful. Sitting in a chair taking it all in, I recalled something that was said to me once in confession " Are you growing the weeds or the

flowers in your life?" It was a simple analogy that was his kind way of saying to me that I was still focusing on my sins and not the fact that I did exactly what I was taught do when I realized my words and actions were not what God wanted. He wanted me to recognize that I made a choice to heal my relationship with Christ and I chose Christ purposefully.

The point is simply whatever we give our energy to is what grows within us, whatever we notice when we look in the flower bed, may just tell us where we are in our faith. Are we admiring the beautiful flowers that continue to grow towards the sun despite their obstacles? Or are we focused on the pesky weeds that continue to take nutrients from the flowers we have worked so hard to enjoy. That memory helped me to stop right where I was sitting and reexamine where I was in my spiritual life. Was I pulling up the weeds or have I given up hope and allowed them to stay?

We know that hope is not restored when we sin, or when the weed grows, it is restored when we decide that whatever it is has no place in

our life, or flower bed, we reconcile and choose to follow Christ.

I wanted to share this spiritual reflection with you because I know I am not alone in growing my weeds, and from time to time we all just need to be reminded that God loves us and needs us to focus on Him and the good He has in store for us and all those we love. As Catholics, we have the amazing opportunity to grow in Christ through regular confession and we should not take that for granted. I am trying hard to make sure that I am checking for weeds in my flower beds and I pray this little reflection will help you know Christ's mercy and grow your flowers in Christ's love.



Prayers for the Week

A SUMMER BLESSING

May you walk with God this summer
In whatever you do,
Wherever you go.

Walking with God means...
Walking with honesty and with courage,
Walking with love and respect
And concern for the feelings of others.
May you talk to God this summer

And every day
 And in every situation.
 Talking with God means...
 Praying words of praise for the beauty of
 creation,
 Saying prayers of thanks for friends and good
 times,
 Asking God's help in all your decisions,
 Expressing sorrow when you have failed.
 May you talk with God every day. Amen

Prayer for Summertime

Loving God, Creator of all times and places,
 we thank you for the gift of summertime,
 the days of light, warmth and leisure.
 Thank you for the beauty that surrounds us
 everywhere we look:
 the multi-colored flowers,
 the deep blue of the sky,
 the tranquil surface of lakes,

the laughter of children at play,
 people strolling in park,
 families gathered around picnic tables and
 the increased time to spend with family and
 friends.
 As we open our eyes and ears to the landscape
 of nature and people,
 open our hearts to receive all as gift.
 Give us that insight to see you as the Divine Artist.
 Help us to realize and appreciate that you are
 laboring
 to keep all in existence.
 And warm our souls with the awareness of your
 presence.
 Let all the gifts we enjoy this summer
 deepen our awareness of you love
 so that we may share this with others and enjoy
 a summertime of re-creation.
 Amen

Catholic Trivia



Last Week's Answers

True or False

1. T or F – No American Bishop has ever been canonized.
False: Bishop Neumann of Philadelphia
2. T or F – The second diocese in the United States was Bardstown, Kentucky
True
3. T or F – St. Louis was once called the "Rome of the West" because it had so many Italians.
False: St. Louis is called the Rome of the West because so many religious orders set up their mother houses here when they were going west.
4. T or F – There is a public school in St. Louis named after a Catholic priest.
True: Marquette high school is named after Fr. Marquette who was a priest and explorer.



This Week's Questions

True or False

1. T or F – The Big Bang Theory was created by a Catholic priest.
2. T or F - Dom Pierre Pérignon, the inventor of champagne was a Catholic monk.
3. T or F – A Catholic by the name of André-Marie Ampère is the reason why we measure electricity in AMPS
4. T or F – Louis Braille, the inventor of the reading and writing format for blind people was also a Catholic.



Quotes of the Week

The affairs of God are accomplished little by little and almost imperceptibly. The Spirit of God is neither violent nor hasty. - St. Vincent de Paul

God does not hasten His works. He does all things in their time. - St. Vincent de Paul

It is not expedient to wish to do everything all at once, or to think that all is lost if everybody else does not hurry along with us. - St. Vincent de

Paul

I don't put a penny's value on this life if only our Lord will give me a tiny corner in Paradise. - St. Camillus de Lellis

Our home is Heaven. On earth we're like travelers staying at a hotel. When you're away, you're always thinking of going home. - St. John Vianney

Catholic Humor

1) Two men considering a religious vocation were having a conversation. "What is similar about the Jesuit and Dominican Orders?" the one asked.

The second replied, "Well, they were both founded by Spaniards -- St. Dominic for the Dominicans, and St. Ignatius of Loyola for the Jesuits. They were also both founded to combat heresy -- the Dominicans to fight the Albigensians, and the Jesuits to fight the Protestants."

"What is different about the Jesuit and Dominican Orders?"

"Met any Albigensians lately?"

2) Two Jesuit novices both wanted a cigarette while they prayed. They decided to ask their superior for permission. The first asked but was told no. A little while later he spotted his friend smoking and praying. "Why did the superior allow you to smoke and not me?" he asked. His friend

replied, "Because you asked if you could smoke while you prayed, and I asked if I could pray while I smoked!"

3) A rabbi, a priest and a minister walk into a bar. The bartender looks up and says, "What is this, a joke?"

4) A Jesuit, a Dominican, and a Trappist were marooned on a desert island. They found a magic lamp, and after some discussion decided to rub it. Lo and behold, a genie appeared and offered them three wishes. They decided it was only fair that they could each have one wish. The Jesuit said he wanted to teach at the world's most famous university, and poof, he was gone! The Dominican wished to preach in the world's largest church, and poof, he was gone! Then the Trappist said, "Gee, I already got my wish!"

Spiritual Adoption

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 6 – Developing Baby – "I'm sitting up straight now!" Spiritual Adoption Program

Your spiritually adopted baby is developing quite beautifully now. Her weight is approaching 2 pounds. She sits up straight now to accommodate her internal organs which have moved into their final place in her little body. Babies born prematurely at this time have a very good chance of surviving. The medical advances in caring for extremely small newborn infants are extraordinary indeed. Don't forget to pray for your baby. Abortion is legal through all nine months and her mom might still feel pressure to abort.