

September 30, 2018 – 26th Sunday Ordinary Time



*MAY JESUS CHRIST BE PRAISED
NOW AND FOREVER!!!*

SPIRITUAL PONDERINGS

Listening

For today's spiritual reflection, I thought I would reflect on the art of listening. To guide our reflections, I will be commenting on an article from Forbes magazine entitled "10 Steps to Effective Listening" by Dianne Schilling. Quotes from her article will be in bold and my commentary will be in the normal font.

Step 6: Wait for the speaker to pause to ask clarifying questions.

When you don't understand something, of course you should ask the speaker to explain it to you. But rather than interrupt, wait until the speaker pauses. Then say something like, "Back up a second. I didn't understand what you just said about..."

It is important to treat others with courtesy because a lack of courtesy breeds defensiveness which can damage a relationship permanently.

Step 7: Ask questions only to ensure understanding.

At lunch, a colleague is excitedly telling you about her trip to Vermont and all the wonderful things she did and saw. In the course of this chronicle, she mentions that she spent some time with a mutual friend. You jump in with, "Oh, I haven't heard from Alice in ages. How is she?" and, just like that, discussion shifts to Alice and her divorce, and the poor kids, which leads to a comparison of

custody laws, and before you know it an hour is gone and Vermont is a distant memory. This particular conversational affront happens all the time. Our questions lead people in directions that have nothing to do with where *they* thought they were going. Sometimes we work our way back to the original topic, but very often we don't. When you notice that your question has led the speaker astray, take responsibility for getting the conversation back on track by saying something like, "It was great to hear about Alice, but tell me more about your adventure in Vermont."

Try to avoid being like the student who tries to keep the teacher off topic so he or she does not get any homework.

Step 8: Try to feel what the speaker is feeling.

If you feel sad when the person with whom you are talking expresses sadness, joyful when she expresses joy, fearful when she describes her fears—and convey those feelings through your facial expressions and words—then your effectiveness as a listener is assured. Empathy is the heart and soul of good listening. To experience empathy, you have to put yourself in the other person's place and allow yourself to feel what it is like to *be her* at that moment. This is not an easy thing to do. It takes energy and concentration. But it is a generous



and helpful thing to do, and it facilitates communication like nothing else does.

The more you can understand how the speaker is feeling the better you will be at spotting faulty logic.

Step 9: Give the speaker regular feedback.

Show that you understand where the speaker is coming from by reflecting the speaker's feelings. "You must be thrilled!" "What a terrible ordeal for you." "I can see that you are confused." If the speaker's feelings are hidden or unclear, then occasionally paraphrase the content of the message. Or just nod and show your understanding through appropriate facial expressions and an occasional well-timed "hmmm" or "uh huh." The idea is to give the speaker some proof that you are listening, and that you are following her train of thought—not off indulging in your own fantasies while she talks to the ether. In task situations, regardless of whether at work or home, always

restate instructions and messages to be sure you understand correctly.

Asking questions can help the person clarify what they are saying helps them know that you are still paying attention and that you have not drifted off.

Step 10: Pay attention to what *isn't* said—to nonverbal cues.

If you exclude email, the majority of direct communication is probably nonverbal. We glean a great deal of information about each other without saying a word. Even over the telephone, you can learn almost as much about a person from the tone and cadence

of her voice than from anything she says. When I talk to my best friend, it doesn't matter what we chat about, if I hear a lilt and laughter in her voice, I feel reassured that she's doing well. Face to face with a person, you can detect enthusiasm, boredom, or irritation very quickly in the expression around the eyes, the set of the mouth, the slope of the shoulders. These are clues you can't ignore. When listening, remember that words convey only a fraction of the message.

Never underestimate the power of body language.

BREAKING OPEN THE WORD

September 30, 2018 Twenty-sixth Sunday in Ordinary Time Lectionary: 137

Gospel **MK 9:38-43, 45, 47-48**

At that time, John said to Jesus, "Teacher, we saw someone driving out demons in your name, and we tried to prevent him because he does not follow us." Jesus replied, "Do not prevent him. There is no one who performs a mighty deed in my name who can at the same time speak ill of me. For whoever is not against us is for us. Anyone who gives you a cup of water to drink because you belong to Christ, amen, I say to you, will surely not lose his reward. "Whoever causes one of these little ones who believe in me to sin, it would be better for him if a great millstone were put around his neck and he were thrown into the sea. If your hand causes you to sin, cut it off. It is better for you to enter into life maimed than with two hands to go into Gehenna, into the unquenchable fire. And if your foot causes you to sin, cut it off. It is better for you to enter into life crippled than with two feet to be thrown into Gehenna. And if your eye causes you to sin, pluck it out. Better for you to enter into the kingdom of God with one eye than with two eyes to be thrown into Gehenna, where 'their worm does not die, and the fire is not quenched.'"

Spiritual Reflection:

"If you board the wrong train, it is no use running along the corridor in the other direction." - Dietrich Bonhoeffer

Sin always lead to self-destruction and so we need to do all we can avoid it. It is not enough to name it. We must also avoid the near occasion or things that lead us into sin.

Spiritual Questions:

1. Why do you think John was trying to stop others from preaching in Jesus' name?
2. Why do you think Jesus is more upset with John than He is with the those who are preaching in His name but are not a part of His group?

Quotes of the Week

How happy is that guardian angel who accompanies a soul to Holy Mass! – Saint John Vianney

The Devil writes down our sins - our Guardian Angel all our merits. Labor that the Guardian Angel's book may be full, and the Devil's empty. - Saint John Vianney

When I see the devil has stopped ensnaring souls, I too will cease looking for new ways to save them from his wily deceits. - St. John Bosco

A farmer had a dog who used to sit by the roadside waiting for vehicles to come around. As soon as one came he would run down the road, barking and trying to overtake it. One day a neighbor asked the farmer "Do you think your dog is ever going to catch a car?" The farmer replied, "That is not what bothers me. What bothers me is what he would do if he ever caught one."

Many people in life behave like that dog who is pursuing meaningless goals.



3. How does this Gospel relate to last week's Gospel where the apostles were arguing about who the greatest was?
4. What are you going to cut out of your life this week in order to avoid sin?
5. How much do you fear hell? (How much do you fear spending an eternity in a place absent of love?)



PRO-LIFE

PRAYER FOR THOSE WHO OPPOSE LIFE

Jesus, Prince of Peace, you have asked us to love our enemies and pray for those who persecute us.

We pray for those who are currently enemies of life and those who oppose us. With the help of the Holy Spirit, may all people learn to work together and grow to have a deeper respect for human life. So that justice which brings true and lasting peace can come to our world and all life be seen as precious. To you be glory and honor for ever and ever. - Amen



St. Monica Society

Please join us in praying a special prayer each month for Catholics who have fallen away from their faith.

PRAYER FOR HEALING OF MIND, BODY, and SOUL

O Jesus, come into the sorrows, anxieties, mental troubles of those who have rejected you. Deliver them from the painful memories of the past. Fill them with your Holy Spirit. Help them to forgive all those who have hurt them. May they come to see You and your Church as the way to true happiness. Fill them and us with your Holy Spirit. Thank you, Jesus. Praise you Jesus. Amen.



PRAYER(S) OF THE WEEK

THE PRAYER, BLESS THIS DAY.

This day is full of beauty and adventure, help me Lord to be fully alive to it all. During this day, may I become a more thoughtful person, a more prayerful person, a more generous and kindly person. Help me not to be turned in on myself but to be sensitive and helpful to others. Let me do nothing today that will hurt anyone, but let me help at least a little, to make life more pleasant for those I meet.

When night comes, may I look back on this day without regrets; and may nobody be unhappy because of anything I have said or done or failed to do.

Lord God, bless this day for me and all of us. Make it a day in which we grow a little more like your Son, and gentle as Mary His Mother. Amen.

BLESSING FOR A MEAL

Dear God: Thank you for preparing this table before us. Thank you for the bounty of the earth, which nourishes our bodies. Thank you for the abundance of your goodness, which sustains our lives, strengthening us to serve you more effectively. Thank you for the hands that prepared this meal and for the joy of being able to share it. For all we have received and all that is yet to come, God, we are thankful! We are grateful! We are fulfilled! In Jesus Name! Amen!

BLESSING OF A CROSS (Or Crucifix)

Heavenly Father, you sent your Son to us because you love us, and want to save us. By the power of his cross, free us from sin and let us live each day for you. Bless + this sign of glory, and let it remind us that Jesus died and rose for all. Help us to carry our cross with him every day, and to follow him in serving others. We ask this grace through Christ our Lord. Amen.

TRIVIA

Last Week's Answers	This Week's Question
1. In what city was Jesus born? = Bethlehem	Match the Apostles with the way that they died.
2. How many books are in the New Testament? = 27	1. Andrew ____ 2. Bartholomew ____
3. What type of insect did John the Baptist eat in the desert? = locust	3. James the Greater ____ 4. James the Less ____
4. Who were the first apostles called to follow Jesus? Andrew	A. Stoned in Jerusalem
5. Who recognized Jesus as the Messiah when he was presented at the Temple as a baby? Simeon and Anna.	B. Crucified on a cross in the shape of an "X"
	C. Had his skin removed while he was still alive.
	D. He was beheaded in Jerusalem.



Humor

A man at a baseball game wondered why the ball kept getting bigger and bigger. Then it hit him.

Austin: Which baseball player makes flapjacks?

Ethan: I don't know.

Austin: The batter!

Christopher: Why did the sausage quit playing baseball?

Anthony: Beats me.

Christopher: Because he was the wurst on his team.