

“The End” Notes

- [1] Abbot Gueranger, O.S.B.; *The Liturgical Year*, Vol. 5, pg.273-74
- [2] Catechism of the Catholic Church - CCC 893
- [3] Fr. John Hardon S.J., *Modern Catholic Dictionary*
- [4] *The Catholic Catechism* pg. 223
- [5] *The Catholic Catechism* pg. 223
- [6] *Ibid.*, III, 22
- [7] CCC 894
- [8] *Modern Catholic Dictionary* pg. 135
- [9] CCC 884
- [10] LG 22
- [11] *Modern Catholic Dictionary* pgs. 178-179
- [12] St. Ignatius of Antioch, *Letter to the Philadelphians*, A.D. 110, [3,2]
- [13] St. Irenaeus, *Against Heresies*, A.D. 180, [4,26,2]
- [14] CCC 2205
- [15] *In Conversation with God* 4, 91.1
- [16] John Paul II, *Apostolic Exhortation, Familiaris Consortio*, 22 November 1981, 59
- [17] John Pul II, *Address to families*, 24 March 1984
- [18] *Conversations with Monsignor Escriva*, 103
- [19] CCC 2685
- [20] *In Conversation with God* 4, 91.2
- [21] John Paul II, *Address to families*, 24 March 1984
- [22] John Paul II, *Angelus in Otranto*, 5 October 1980
- [23] John Paul II, *Homily*, 12 October 1980
- [24] John XXIII, *Address*, 29 September 1961
- [25] *In Conversation with God* 4, 91.1
- [26] CCC 2689
- [27] *Jerome Biblical Commentary Matthew 43:128*
- [28] CCC 1849
- [29] Abbot Gueranger, O.S.B.; *The Liturgical Year*, Vol. 5, pg.274-75
- [30] *Jerome Biblical Commentary Matthew 43:128*
- [31] CCC1869
- [32] CCC 1849
- [33] CCC 1868
- [34] *Roman Catholic Daily Missal [1962] page 27*
- [35] *Jerome Biblical Commentary Matthew 43:128*
- [36] St. Ignatius of Antioch, *Letter to the Magnesians*, A.D.110, [13,1]
- [37] Saint Philip Neri; Paul Thigpen; *A Dictionary of Quotes from the Saints*
- [38] *The Order of the Mass; The Communion Rite*
- [39] Antonio Spadaro, S.J.; *A Big Heart Open to God*
- [40] Rev. W. Cramer; *The Christian Father; What he should be and What he should do.*

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Confronting Sin 23rd Sunday of Ordinary Time

Lessons and Discussions

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“whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.”

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“For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them.”

Page 11 – Confronting Sin

“If your brother sins, go and tell him his faults”

Entrance Antiphon - Simple English Propers

This should be chanted so that the time of prayer, study and discussion can be made sacred. Another song can be substituted, but should have the same theme.

Iustus es, Domine

Ps 119 (118): 137, 124

Y ^IOU are righteous, O Lord, * and right is your judgment; deal with this servant of yours according to your mer-cy.

Source: <http://www.ccwatershed.org/>

Alternate options:Hymn

All Creatures of Our God and King
 Christ Is Made the Sure Foundation
 God of Our Fathers
 Love Divine, All Loves Excelling
Songs of Praise
 You Never Let Go (Matt Redman)

Collect – Roman Missal

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.
 Amen

O God, by whom we were redeemed and receive adoption,
 look graciously upon your beloved sons and daughters,
 that those who believe in Christ
 may receive true freedom
 and an everlasting inheritance.
 Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,
 who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
 one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

Oremus. Omnipotens sempiternus Deus, qui gloriosae Virginis Matris Mariae corpus et animam, ut dignum Filii tui habitaculum effici mereretur, Spiritu Sancto cooperante, praeparasti, da, ut cuius commemoratione laetamur; eius pia intercessione, ab instantibus malis et a morte perpetua liberemur. Per eundem Christum Dominum nostrum. Amen.

Slave Regina (English Translation)

Hail, holy Queen, Mother of mercy, our life, our sweetness and our hope. To thee do we cry, poor banished children of Eve. To thee to we send up our sighs, mourning and weeping in this valley of tears. Turn, then, most gracious advocate, thine eyes of mercy toward us, and after this, our exile, show unto us the blessed fruit of thy womb, Jesus. O clement, O loving, O sweet Virgin Mary.

V. Pray for us, O holy Mother of God.

R. That we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ.

Let us pray. Almighty and everlasting God, Who by the working of the Holy Spirit didst prepare both body and soul of the glorious Virgin Mother, Mary, that she might deserve to be made a worthy dwelling for Thy Son, grant that we who rejoice in her memory, may, by her loving intercession, be delivered from present evils and from lasting death, through the same Christ our Lord. Amen.

Marian Antiphon – Salve Regina

V
S Alve Re-gí-na, * ma-ter mi-se-ri-córdi-æ, Vi-ta, dul-
cé-do, et spes nostra, salve. Ad te clamá-mus, éxsu-
les, fí-li-i Hevæ. Ad te suspi-rá-mus, geméntes et flen-
tes in hac lacrimá-rum valle. E-ia ergo, Advo-cá-ta
nostra, illos tu-os mi-se-ri-córdes ó-cu-los ad nos con-
vér-te. Et Je-sum, be-ne-díctum fructum ventris tu-i,
no-bis post hoc exsí-li-um osténde. O cle-mens:
O pi-a: O dulcis Virgo Ma-rí-a.

V. Ora pro nobis, sancta Dei Genitrix.

R. Ut digni efficamur promissionibus Christi.

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.
Amen

Gospel Reading – Matthew 18:15-20 – Roman Missal

NOTE: *In the Roman Catholic Tridentine Lectionary this Gospel is read on Tuesday after Third Sunday of Lent*

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew
- Glory to you O Lord

If your brother sins (against you), go and tell him his fault between you and him alone. If he listens to you, you have won over your brother. If he does not listen, take one or two others along with you, so that 'every fact may be established on the testimony of two or three witnesses.' If he refuses to listen to them, tell the church. If he refuses to listen even to the church, then treat him as you would a Gentile or a tax collector. Amen, I say to you, whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven. Again, (amen,) I say to you, if two of you agree on earth about anything for which they are to pray, it shall be granted to them by my heavenly Father. For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them."

The Gospel of the Lord.

- Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ

Spiritual Reading – Office of Readings – Tuesday of the 23rd Week of Ordinary Time

From a sermon by Saint Bernard, abbot

We read in the gospel that when the Lord was teaching his disciples and urged them to share in his passion by the mystery of eating his body, some said: This is a hard saying; and from that time they no longer followed him. When he asked the disciples whether they also wished to go away, they replied: Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life.

I assure you, my brothers, that even to this day it is clear to some that the words which Jesus speaks are spirit and life, and for this reason they follow him. To others these words seem hard, and so they look elsewhere for some pathetic consolation. Yet wisdom cries out in the streets, in the broad and spacious

way that leads to death, to call back those who take this path.

Finally, he says: for forty years I have been close to this generation, and I said: They have always been fainthearted. You also read in another psalm: God has spoken once. Once, indeed, because for ever. His is a single, uninterrupted utterance, because it is continuous and unending.

He calls upon sinners to return to their true spirit and rebukes them when their hearts have gone astray, for it is in the true heart that he dwells and there he speaks, fulfilling what he taught through the prophet: Speak to the heart of Jerusalem.

You see, my brothers, how the prophet admonishes us for our advantage: If today you hear his voice, harden not your hearts. You can read almost the same words in the gospel and in the prophet. For in the gospel the Lord says: My sheep hear my voice. And in the psalm blessed David says: You are his people (meaning, of course, the Lord's) and the sheep of his pasture. If today you hear his voice, harden not your hearts.

Hear also the prophet Habakkuk. Far from hiding the Lord's reprimands, he dwells on them with attentive and anxious care. He says: I will stand upon my watchtower and take up my post on the ramparts, keeping watch to see what he will say to me and what answer I will make to those who try to confute me. I beg you, my brothers, stand upon our watchtower, for now is the time for battle. Let all our dealings be in the heart, where Christ dwells, in right judgment and wise counsel, but in such a way as to place no confidence in those dealings, nor rely upon our fragile defenses.

Responsory – Office of Readings – Tuesday of the 23rd Week of Ordinary Time

The laws of the Lord are all before me, and I have not failed to keep his statutes.

- The decrees of the Lord are upright and bring joy to the heart.

The precepts of the Lord are clear and enlighten the eyes. The love of God reaches perfection in those who are obedient to his word.

- The decrees of the Lord are upright and bring joy to the heart.

God, “powerful to bestow every grace in abundance,” and to move with Thy grace the most hardened hearts. How often hast Thou brought back the most obstinate sinners! How often hast Thou listened to the prayer of pious mothers, and for their sake granted to their children the grace of true conversion! Therefore, despise not my prayer, though I confess it is not worthy of being heard. I have sinned before Thee, and I myself may partly be the cause of my son's [daughter's] faults and errors. But, O merciful God! Pardon me, since I am truly sorry for my sins. Let mercy take the place of justice. Through Thy infinite mercy, through the merits of Thy divine Son, my Savior, through the intercession of the most blessed Virgin Mary, of St. Joseph, and of all the saints in heaven, I entreat Thee, visit my son [my daughter] with Thy grace, that he [she] may see his [her] faults, be heartily sorry for them, and, henceforward walking in all things according to Thy holy will and divine pleasure, obtain salvation.

O Mary, Mother of Mercy, refuge of sinners, St. Joseph, and all ye saints in heaven, assist me in my supplication with your mighty intercession, that it may be granted! Amen.

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.
Amen

painting. ““That finger of Jesus, pointing at Matthew. That’s me. I feel like him. Like Matthew.” Here the pope becomes determined, as if he had finally found the image he was looking for: “It is the gesture of Matthew that strikes me: he holds on to his money as if to say, ‘No, not me! No, this money is mine.’ Here, this is me, a sinner on whom the Lord has turned his gaze.”[39]

MOVIE - titanic never let go scene - POP CULTURE CONNECTION - 0:15

<http://youtu.be/LGqtcErSUeg>

We remember the scene from titanic. Jack says, “You must do me this honor... promise me you will survive... that you will never give up... no matter what happens... no matter how hopeless... promise me now, and never let go of that promise.” Rose says, “I promise.” Jack then says, “Never let go.” Rose says, “I promise. I will never let go, Jack. I’ll never let go.” **How many times do we let go, just like this humorous scene? And what do we let go of Christ for?** Even if we let go of Christ, He never lets go of us. We must imitate Christ and never give up on our self or on other. Conversion is always possible.

Profession of Faith or Popular Devotion – Prayer to be said for children who are addicted to certain faults

Although this prayer is for fathers who are praying for their children, this prayer can be prayed by anyone who cares for another. This prayer is powerful because the person praying has been unable to bring about conversion through their words or actions and is relying on prayer to aid their future words and actions. This prayer can be prayed for any soul who continues to stay in their fault. We are inspired to persevere in prayer, especially through the example of Saint Monica who prayed for over 20 years for her son Saint Augustine to convert from sin.

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.
Amen

Almighty God! Rich in graces Thou who directest the hearts of men like rivers of water, graciously listen to my supplication in behalf of my son [my daughter]. Thou knowest how much the sad condition of his [her] soul fills my heart with sorrow and anxiety. All my endeavors in his [her] regard prove fruitless. What remains for me but to take refuge in Thee?” Thou are, O

Church Authority – Lesson and Discussion

“whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.”

This Sunday’s Gospel Reading is very misunderstood. Many Christians only look at the last verse and try to interpret the passage to mean we should bring our troubles to each other and pray together. While this is true, we should gather together and pray, there is a deeper teaching. This teaching is in regards to the nature of the Church.

What is the Church that our Lord is referring to? Is the Church simply two or more gathered in His name? “If a man hear not the Church, let him be to thee as a heathen and publican. What is this Church? Men, to whom Jesus Christ said: ‘He that heareth you, heareth Me; and he that despiseth you, despiseth Me.’ (Luke 10:16). Men, from whose lips comes to the world the truth, without which there is no salvation; men, who alone on earth have power to reconcile the sinner with his God, save him from the hell he has deserved, and open to him the gates of heaven. Can we be surprised, after this, that our Saviour – who would have these men to be His instruments, and as it were, the communication between Himself and mankind – should treat as a heathen, as one that has never received Baptism, him that refuses to acknowledge their authority? There is no revealed truth, except through their teaching; there is no salvation, except through the Sacraments which they administer; there is no hoping in Christ Jesus, except where there is submission to the spiritual laws which they promulgate.”[1]

Jesus gives instruction on how people ought to admonish the sinner. This should be done one-on-one first. If this is not successful, the a few people are brought in to admonish the sinner. However, when those stages fail there needs to be a person or group that decides. This group is the Apostles, the first Bishops. For a second time Jesus speaks of “binding and loosening”. **Where do we hear this the first time?** We hear this permission of binding and loosing specifically to Peter when he becomes the head of the Church.

Who is Jesus giving power to “bind and loose” to? The Gospel reading shows Jesus now extending the power to bind and loose to the rest of the Apostles. The role of the bishops first is to put the Eucharist at the center of the life of the Church.

“The bishop and priests sanctify the Church by their prayer and work, by their ministry of the Word and of the sacraments. They sanctify her by their example, ‘not as domineering over those in your charge but being examples to the flock.’ (1 Pet 5:3) Thus, ‘together with the flock entrusted to them, they may attain to eternal life.’”[2]

Why did Jesus give the power to bind and loose to the other Apostles? Jesus gives this power to the rest of the Apostles because they were to become the Bishops of the Church. He gives them the same power as Peter to show that they are all brothers, however, Peter, as the chief Apostle and the first to receive this power, has supreme authority. Our Lord gave His authority to Peter and the Apostles. The Holy Father, Bishops and the teaching authority they have been given is called the Magisterium. The Magisterium is “the Church’s teaching authority, vested in the bishops, as successors of the Apostles, under the Roman Pontiff, as successor of St. Peter. Also vested in the Pope, as Vicar of Christ and visible head of the Catholic Church.”[3]

VIDEO - Bill Cosby responds to Victoria Osteen - POP CULTURE CONNECTION - 0:38

<http://youtu.be/00-6OyXVA0M>

Does everyone have authority to teach the Gospel? This video is an example of a so-called authority who has no authority at all. **What are the dangers that can be done when people teach without the authority of the Church?**

Can any of the Bishops bind and loose anything then? No. As mentioned earlier, the supreme authority when binding and loosening in regards to issues of faith and morals must adhere to the supreme Bishop of Rome, the Pope. “Bishops depend on Rome for the actualization of their authority, whether as individuals with respect to the people under their immediate care or as a college with responsibility to the whole Church of God. Not so with the Pope.”[4] So while a group of Bishops can make rules and laws, it must depend ultimately on the Pope. This was the same as it has always been even in the time of Peter. (Acts 15:1-12) In fact, the Pope has the authority to dictate how much or how little another Bishop has. “Consequently union with the Vicar of Christ determines whether and how much authority the bishops actually exercise.”[5]

them, a group has corrected them and the Church has corrected them, the person has separated themselves from the Body of Christ the Church. It is for this reason that they are compared to a gentile or tax collector. The gentile and tax collectors were separated from the community. When we refuse to be reconciled with others and with the Church, we separate ourselves. This however does not have to be the end.

How did Jesus treat the tax collectors and gentiles? Jesus sought reconciliation with the tax collector and gentile. Zacchaeus and Saint Matthew are two tax collectors, both of whom desire to be reconciled. Zacchaeus moved through the crowd and climbed a tree just to get a glimpse of Jesus and then Jesus dined at his house. Jesus also went to His house of Saint Matthew to eat with him and personally called him out of sin and to a life of grace. Jesus never gave up on the gentile or the tax collector and He never gives up on the sinner. He states the sin very clearly and He always calls the sinner out of the sin into a life of repentance. We too must call sin a sin, but must never give up hope regarding conversion; we can never stop personally calling the sinner to repentance to a life of holiness. We too must remember that we are always in need of conversion and must keep a penitent heart.

ART - Fr. Jim Grummer, SJ, Reflects on Caravaggio's "The Calling of St. Matthew" - POP CULTURE CONNECTION - 1:28

<http://youtu.be/LGqtcErSUeg>

We are all like St. Matthew, holding on to our sin, our life, our will. Fr. Jim Grummer gives a very short explanation of this masterpiece by Caravaggio. Jesus’s finger, which points at St. Matthew and at us looks very much like the finger of God reaching out to Adam, the creature God just created. Christ finger pointing at us is an acknowledgment of our sin, but also the chance to be reconciled, to follow Him, and thus be a new creation. Zacchaeus and Saint Matthew both were not worthy that Jesus would come under their roof, but yet Jesus did enter under their roof because of His great mercy and their penitent hearts. At the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass we come with penitent hearts and declare to our Lord, “Lord, I am not worthy that you should enter under my roof, but only say the word and my soul shall be healed.”[38] Jesus not only dines with us, but feeds us with His very Body and Blood.

“The Calling of St. Matthew” by Caravaggio is one of Pope Francis’s favorite paintings. He recently commented on the

Why do we need to bring the matter to the Church? "Be subject to the bishop and to one another, as Jesus Christ was subject to the Father, and the Apostles were subject to Christ and to the Father; so that there may be unity in both body and spirit"[36] It makes sense how we would correct another person alone in person and then if that did not work bring others to intervene, but we can also bring the matter to the Church, which would mean that we literally bring our friend to seek the assistance of a priest, deacon or someone who is appointed by the Church to help. Another way to look at it is to bring the Church to the matter. If the person is not willing to come to the Church, then we bring the Church to them. In truth and charity we can share with the person what the Church says about the matter. Truth and charity are essential. No matter how hard a heart may seem it is charity that will slowly make an opening. "First let a little love find entrance into their hearts, and the rest will follow."[37] The Church does not error in regards to faith and morals and so the Church's voice is the standard in which the matter at hand is judged. It is important that we get our facts straight and are not ignorant. If we have to bring the Church to the person because we are unable to bring the person to the Church we need to be correct in what we say or we could cause more harm and even scandal to the Church. It would be good to use a valid source like the text of the Catechism of the Catholic Church or perhaps the advice of the Saints, Holy Father or Bishops in regard to the matter.

How do we go about correcting someone in sin? First and foremost, we must pray that God will give us the wisdom and virtue to say what needs to be said. Second, we must do everything in charity because it "binds everything together in perfect harmony" (Col 3:14). We must help them seek forgiveness and reconciliation with the Church through the Sacraments. What a blessing we have a pattern to follow, that Our Lord Himself gave us. We always need to keep the steps in mind:

1. Go to the person individually, one on one.
2. Take a second or more people if needed.
3. Take the person to the Church and if that is not possible take the Church to the person.

What about the fourth step, treating the person like a gentile or tax collector? When a baptized person stays in habitual sin, despite the fact that an individual has corrected

How can the Pope have this much authority? "The Pope's power of primacy over all, both pastors and faithful, remains whole and intact. In virtue of his office, that is, as Vicar of Christ and pastor of the whole Church, the Roman Pontiff has full, supreme, and universal power over the Church. And he is always free to exercise this power."[6] However, the Pope still confers with the bishops and acts to defend the bishops.

When there are special needs regarding faith and morals or any matter that requires the Church's attention, councils may be formed to help give judgment on the matter to the Bishops. "The bishops, as vicars and legates of Christ, govern the particular Churches assigned to them by their counsels, exhortations, and example, but over and above that also by the authority and sacred power"[7]

What is a Church Council? A Church Council is an "authorized gatherings of bishops for the purpose of discussing ecclesiastical problems with a view to passing decrees on matters under discussion."[8] Ecclesiastical means the Church as an institutional structure or its members. Church Councils can be with just a few Bishops from a particular region, area, or even country. The Gospel reading this Sunday gives the power of binding and loosening to the Bishops when they are gathered together in council and in prayer, "Amen, amen I say to you, if two of you agree on earth about anything for which they are to pray, it shall be granted to them by my heavenly Father." (Matthew 18:19).

What is the difference between a Church Council and an Ecumenical Council? An Ecumenical Council is when all the Bishops from around the world are invited to come together to defend, explain, and bring those who have fallen away back into the Catholic Church. Ecumenical means "universal" and brings to share the one faith that is bonded by the whole world. "The college of bishops exercises power over the universal Church in a solemn manner in an ecumenical council."[9] It is not an Ecumenical Council unless it is "confirmed or at least recognized as such by Peter's successor."[10] In the Roman Catholic Church there have been twenty-one Ecumenical Councils.[11]

Why should we follow the Bishops? "Those, indeed, who belong to God and to Jesus Christ - they are with the bishop. Do not err, my brethren: if anyone follow a schismatic; he will not inherit the kingdom of God."[12] Jesus warns that the ultimate

governance when dealing with faith and morals is the Church that He established. The Apostles, through the laying on of hands, handed down the power to bind and loose through the Bishops through the ages. To follow the authority of the Bishops in union with the Holy Father, is to follow the authority of Christ. As Saint Irenaeus wrote, "It is necessary to obey those who are the presbyters in the Church, those who as we have shown, have succession from the Apostles; those who have received, with the succession of the episcopate, the sure charisma of truth according to the good pleasure of the Father. But the rest, who have no part in the primitive succession and assemble wheresoever they will, must be held in suspicion." [13]

A Family of Prayer – Lesson and Discussion

"For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them."

There are many analogies for the Church. Saint Paul calls the Church a Body with many parts. The Church has two main parts, the head and the members. The head of the Body is Christ, the members are the faithful. Our Lord tells us, "when two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them." (Matthew 18:20). The members must not only be gathered together, but they must be gathered in the name of their head Jesus Christ. The physical head of the Church on earth is the Holy Father and thus the members must be in union with the Holy Father, the Vicar of Christ.

The fundamental place where we gather from the beginning is within the family. The family is the domestic Church. Just at the bishops and faithful must be centered in a community of prayer, so to a husband and wife together with their children must be centered in a community of prayer. It is not enough that just one member of the family pray, this would be the equivalent to saying that it would be enough if only one bishop at a council was praying.

Why does prayer start in the family? The very essence of culture starts with the family unit; a husband, a wife, and children. "The Christian family is a communion of persons, a sign and image of the communion of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. In the procreation and education of children it reflects the Father's work of creation. It is called to partake in the prayer and sacrifice of Christ. Daily prayer and the reading of the Word of God strengthen it in charity. The Christian family

else? Sin hurts the person as well as others. "It wounds the nature of man and injures human solidarity." [32] At the very least it hurts the person and offends God. Sin is a personal act, and we cooperate in them "by participating directly and voluntarily in them; by ordering, advising, praising, or approving them; by not disclosing or not hindering them when we have an obligation to do so; by protecting evil-doers." [33] The third really pertains to us and to the Gospel reading when we have an obligation to do something when we see another sinning.

There are nine ways of being accessory to another's sin. **Give a brief definition of the nine and some examples?** By counsel. By command. By consent. By provocation/ By praise or flattery. By concealment. By partaking. By silence. By defense of the ill done. [34]

Why should I go in private to speak to a person who has sinned? Speaking to the person in private helps alleviate embarrassment. If someone had their zipper down on their pants, they would not have the one person notice shout, "Hey! Your fly is down!" The person who is sinning may not even know they are sinning. They may be oblivious to it as a person is when they accidentally leave their zipper undone. They are much more thankful that someone came to them privately and told them so they can correct it.

Why should I bring multiple people the second time? In today's standards this is looked at as an "intervention". Sometimes a person who is in the wrong cannot be swayed by just one voice. However, bringing two or three more people who have been affected by their sin can bring a little bit more validity to the person who is trying to bring back the lost soul. "But should he be [resistant], a few witnesses are to be summoned for another reproof. In the law of Dt. 19:15 the evidence of a single witness is not enough for a conviction; the principle is applied here somewhat loosely. The witnesses are to add weight to the reproof, which they can only do by sharing it." [35]

TV Show - Interventions How I Met Your Mother - POP CULTURE CONNECTION - 1:27

<http://youtu.be/yTVsnK8RGvs>

Friends can intervene when necessary. They can help show them the errors of their way. This clip brings lightheartedness to the subject.

seven physical. One of the spiritual works of mercy is to “admonish the sinner.” This is not only a good thing to do, but a duty as a Christian. “The mercy which God commands us to show to our fellow-creatures, does not consist only in corporal and spiritual almsdeeds to the poor and the suffering; it includes, moreover, the pardon and forgetfulness of injuries. This is the test whereby God proves the sincerity of our conversion. With the same measure that you shall mete withal, it shall be measured to you again. (Luke 6:38). If we, from our hearts pardon our enemies, our heavenly Father will unreservedly pardon us. These are the days when we are hoping to be reconciled with our God; let us do all we can to gain our brother; and for this end, pardon him, if needs be, seventy times seven times. Surely, we are not going to allow the miserable quarrels of our earthly pilgrimage to make us lose heaven! Therefore, let us forgive insults and injuries, and thus imitate our God Himself, who is ever forgiving us.”[29]

Why should we correct others who haven’t sinned against us personally? While the text does say “against you” it does not mean a personal attack. The brother whom Christ speaks of is all of our Christian brethren. We are all one body and so if one part of the body is hurt then pain can be felt elsewhere and the damage can also carry to other parts of the body. If someone stubs their toe the pain courses through their body and makes them have to walk awkwardly for a while until it heals. There are many card games, some in which you keep the jokers in the deck, some in which you take them out. If the game called for jokers to be taken out, but you accidentally left the jokers in, the jokers would affect not only the whole game but the whole deck and the game would have to begin again. Each card matters and if any of the cards are taken out, just as sin “takes us out” the whole deck is affected. We must watch after our soul, the soul of others and the soul of the whole Body. “Thus, the duty of correction is therefore not limited to offenses that are personal.”[30] Another reason for correcting someone who is sinning is because “Sins give rise to social situations and institutions that are contrary to the divine goodness. ‘Structures of sin’ are the expression and effect of personal sins. They lead their victims to do evil in their turn. In an analogous sense, they constitute a ‘social sin.’”[31] **What are some modern day “social sins” and “structures of sin” that look to destroy God?**

What if the person isn’t hurting me personally or anyone

has an evangelizing and missionary task.”[14] Saint Angela Merici said, “Disorder in society is a result of disorder in the family.” Prayer helps bring order to a family especially in a time when every person of the family is being stretched here and there, and there is little time when a family is all-together. Starting ones life in prayer with the family helps foster prayer to parents, children, brothers and sisters. “Prayer fosters the supernatural vision that makes it possible for us to understand what is happening around us and in the family, and teaches us to see that nothing is foreign to the plans of God.”[15] To start with prayer shows who is at the supreme head of the family, God. When we put God at the head of the family we are able to cherish the blessings and accept the struggles with persistence and fortitude. If we start all of this in the family, then we can begin to share this with our neighbor. To pray for family members helps us pray for others. To forgive a brother or sister helps us forgive a complete stranger. To place God, as the head of the family will in turn put God as the head in our lives. “The dignity and responsibility of the Christian family as the domestic Church can be achieved only with God’s unceasing aid, which will surely be granted if it is humbly and trustingly petitioned for in prayer.”[16]

VIDEO - Motivational Video - Change Yourself First - POP CULTURE CONNECTION - 2:58

<http://youtu.be/EgOPrYgjvs4>

This poem provides a useful parallel in its observation that the change of one's self is what impacts the family, which then spreads outward to the community, the nation, and to the world. This is similar to how prayer that begins in the family strengthens the family's faith and creates order, which then spreads outward by example and witness into society.

Why should a family pray together? Saint John Paul the Great wrote a letter specifically to families. In the letter, he makes it very clear, “The family that prays together stays together, a family that prays is a family that is saved. Act in such a way that your homes may be places of Christian faith and virtue through your praying together.”[17] Praying as a family on a daily basis helps “to ensure that God is not regarded as a stranger whom we go to visit in church once a week on Sunday. He will be seen and treated as He really is, not only in church, but also at home.”[18]

Praying as family also helps teach children their basic prayers.

“The Christian family is the first place of education in prayer. Based on the sacrament of marriage, the family is the ‘domestic church’ where God’s children learn to pray ‘as the Church’ and to persevere in prayer. For young children in particular, daily family prayer is the first witness of the Church’s living memory as awakened patiently by the Holy Spirit.[19] Learning the Our Father, Hail Mary, grace before meals, Angelus, and the Guardian Angel prayer are just but a few of the basic prayers that are taught to us by our family. “How many young people, now men and women, warmly remember the simple and exact explanation that their mother or an older brother or sister gave them of the real presence of Christ in the tabernacle”.[20] **When was a time when you saw a friend or family member express their faith so reverently that it had an impact on you?**

What prayers should the family pray? While of course any and all prayer with the family is good and should be encouraged, the Holy Rosary is one of the most powerful weapons against Satan who seeks to destroy the family. Saint John Paul II encouraged a family life of prayer, especially in the rosary even if it was just a decade.[21] The Rosary, along with the Angelus, as the Holy Father taught, “should be for every Christian and even more so for Christian families, a spiritual oasis during the day from which to get courage and confidence.[22] How I wish that the beautiful custom of praying the family rosary would begin again.”[23] Remember, any form of prayer as a family whether it’s personal prayers that a family chooses, or variation of prayers for different times of the year is completely fine, the importance is prayer. As mentioned before however, the rosary is our weapon and “is considered as a great public and universal prayer in the face of the ordinary and extraordinary needs of the Church, of nations, and of the entire world.”[24]

Why is family prayer more special than private prayer?

Personal prayer and devotion is of course vitally important to our salvation. “Nobody can take our place in this personal dealing with God.”[25] Personal prayer helps us intimately connect with Our Lord one on one. Communal prayer however, whether it be in a church, a group, or the family, has been just as vital in the Church. From the moment of the established Church, she has prayed in communion (Acts 12:5). We receive abundant graces and fruits from praying together.

What if my family doesn’t pray together? If someone is the only person in their family who prays, first they should pray for

their family members. The next step is to gently ask a member or two of the family to pray with them. Continue to ask when appropriate and in charity. If someone is still has no headway, joining a prayer group would be beneficial for them. “Prayer Groups, indeed ‘schools of prayer,’ are today one of the signs and one of the driving forces of renewal of prayer in the Church, provided they drink from authentic wellsprings of Christian prayer. Concern for ecclesial communion is a sign of true prayer in the Church.”[26] This continual practice of prayer will help bring virtue, grace, and blessings into one’s life.

Confronting Sin – Lesson and Discussion

“If your brother sins go and tell him his faults”

Jesus tells us in the Gospel reading what we should do if someone is sinning against us. When someone is sinning we should not look at him or her as a useless or pathetic person, but as a lost sheep. Right before Jesus speaks of a brother who sins against us, He spoke of the parable of the lost sheep (Matthew 18:10-14). “This passage shows one of the ways in which the members of the Church must seek out the sheep that has wandered.”[27] We look not to confront a person in a manner to hurt them, but to win them back for Christ. Jesus speaks of gaining back. This means we too lost something, not just them. We should always ask our self what are motive is. Is our motive only to tell a person their faults or do we really want them to come back to truth, do we really want to be in union with that person?

Why should we confront someone of his or her sin? Speaking to someone who is in the wrong is never fun. Many times confronting someone who is sinning can bring a host of negative attacks back at the person doing the confronting. The person who is sinning can feel hatred, sadness, anger, repulsion, attacked and/or a host of other feelings. Regardless of how the person feels they are sinning and sin “is failure in genuine love for God and neighbor caused by a perverse attachment to certain goods.”[28] Many times people do not even know they are in sin until someone tells them. In either case, if we truly love them we want to tell them because we want to save them from the sin and ultimately save their souls.

In the beatitudes Jesus says, “blessed are the merciful.” We are called therefore to be merciful and the Church in her wisdom has outlined for us fourteen works of mercy, seven spiritual and