



A Newsletter from the Missions Office/Pontifical Mission Societies in the United States
Catholic Diocese of Columbus, Ohio

God loves us so much that He allows us to choose where to spend eternity

To monthly mission donors: "Thank you for your support!"

On behalf of His Excellency Frederick F. Campbell, the Bishop of Columbus, and Father Andrew Small, OMI, the National Director of the Pontifical Mission Societies in the United States, I would like to thank you for your prayers, sacrifices and financial support for the missions.

The life of the famous actor Edwin Thomas Booth was never the same after his brother John Wilkes Booth assassinated President Abraham Lincoln on that April night in 1865 (Wikipedia). Shame from his brother's crime drove him into retirement. He would have never returned to the stage had it not been for a twist of fate at a New Jersey train station.

Edwin was waiting for his coach when a well-dressed young man, pressed by the crowd, lost his footing and fell between the platform and a moving train. Without hesitation, Edwin locked a leg around a railing, grabbed the man, and pulled him to safety. After the sighs of relief, the young man recognized the famous actor Edwin Thomas Booth.

Edwin, however, did not recognize the man he had rescued. The knowledge came later in a

letter that he carried in his pocket to his grave. It was a letter from General Adams Budeau, chief secretary to General Ulysses S. Grant. It was a letter thanking Edwin Booth for saving the life of the child of Abraham Lincoln.

How ironic. One brother killed a President and the other saved a President's son.

Edwin and John had the same father, the same mother and the same profession. One chose life and the other chose death. How could this happen?

Abel and Cain were both sons of Adam and Eve. Cain chose to murder his brother. And God let him.

Abraham and Lot were both pilgrims in Canaan. Abraham chose God. Lot chose Sodom. And God let him.

Peter and Judas were both apostles. Both of them denied the Lord. Peter chose to ask for forgiveness. Judas chose to commit suicide. And God let him.

In every age in history, on every page of the Scriptures, the truth is revealed: God allows us to make our own choices.

Jesus made this truth very clear to us. According to Jesus we can choose a narrow gate or a wide gate, a narrow road or a wide

road, a big crowd or a small crowd (Matt. 7:13-14).

We can choose to build on rock or to build on sand (Matt. 7:24-27), to serve God or to serve riches (Matt. 6:24), to be numbered among the sheep or the goats (Matt. 25:32-33).

And those who reject God will go away to eternal punishment, but the righteous to eternal life (Matt. 25:46). God gives eternal choices and these choices have eternal consequences.

Two crooks crucified with Christ had so much in common. Both were convicted of a crime and condemned to the same death. The same crowd surrounded them both. They were both equally close to the same Jesus. They both shared the same sarcasm (Matt. 27:44). But one changed his mind. We do not know much about this crook. But we know that he had chosen the wrong crowd, wrong morals and wrong behavior. But because he changed his mind, he is now enjoying heaven. He is enjoying the good choice he made.

Two crooks saw the same Jesus; one mocked Him and the other prayed. When one prayed, Jesus loved him enough to save him. And when the other mocked, and Jesus loved him enough to let him. God loves us so much that He honors our choice where to spend eternity.

Upcoming Collections

Home Missions - Weekend of June 3 and 4. Proceeds are for the benefit of dioceses in the United States and its territories that are designated by the USCCB as mission dioceses.

Peter Pence - Weekend of June 24 and 25. Proceeds are for the charitable funds of the Holy Father to enable him to respond to disasters and emergencies around the world.

Pope Francis' May Prayer Intention:

That Christians in Africa, in imitation of the Merciful Jesus, may give prophetic witness to reconciliation, justice, and peace.

Quip:

Prayer is the stop that keeps you going.

Quest:

Adversity introduces man to himself.

Quote:

The best and most beautiful things in the world cannot be seen or even touched - they must be felt with the heart. ~ **Helen Keller**

The decision we will always remember

God is an inviting God. He invited Eve to marry Adam, the animals to enter the ark, David to be the king, Nehemiah to rebuild Jerusalem.

God invited Mary to be the Mother of God, the disciples to fish for men, the adulterous woman to start all over again, Thomas to touch His wounds. God is the King who prepares the palace, sets the table and invites His subjects to come in.

"Come" is God's favorite word. "Come, let us talk about this thing. Even though your sins are like scarlet, they can be as white as snow" (Isaiah 1:18). "All you who are thirsty, come and drink" (Isaiah 55:1). "Come to me all you who are tired and have heavy loads and I will give you rest" (Matthew 11:28). "Come to the wedding feast" (Matthew 22:1-14). "Come, follow me. I will make you fish for people" (Matthew 4:19).

Jesus invites us to have a relationship with him. His invitation is simple and absolute. Jesus is clear in what he asks and He is clear in what He offers. The choice is up to us.

Is that amazing? We have no choice over many things in life. We cannot choose the weather. We cannot control the economy. We cannot choose the size of our nose, the color of our hair, or how tall we are.

But we can choose where we spend eternity. The big choice God leaves to us. The most critical decision is ours.

What are we doing with God's invitation? That's the only decision that really matters. That is the decision we will always remember.

God's thoughts are not like ours

We think to preserve our body; God thinks of saving our soul. We dream of a pay raise, God dreams of raising us from the dead. We avoid pain and seek peace, God uses pain to bring peace. We would like to live before we die, God asks us to die so we could have life. We rejoice at our success, God rejoices at our confessions.

A joke a priest can tell:

A Jewish lady named Mrs. Rosenberg many years ago was stranded late one night at a fashionable resort - one that did not admit Jews.

The desk clerk looked down at his book and said, "Sorry, no room. The hotel is full."

The Jewish lady said, "But your sign says that you have vacancies."

The desk clerk stammered and then said curtly, "You know that we do not admit Jews. Now if you will try the other side of town..."

Mrs. Rosenberg stiffened noticeably and said, "I'll have you know I converted to your religion."

The desk clerk said, "Oh, yeah, let me give you a little test. How was Jesus born?"

Mrs. Rosenberg replied, "He was born to a virgin named Mary in a little town called Bethlehem."

"Very good," replied the hotel clerk. "Tell me more."

Mrs. Rosenberg replied, "He was born in a manger."

"That's right," said the hotel clerk. "And why was he born in a manger?"

Mrs. Rosenberg said loudly, "Because a jerk like you in the hotel wouldn't give a Jewish lady a room for the night!"

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