

January 26, 2020

DO YOU WANT TO BE A SAINT?

Since our baptism, we are all CALLED TO BE HOLY! Are we taking that call seriously? Is our greatest desire to become a saint (with a small "s")? To be a saint is to be with God. We all desire to go to HEAVEN. To be a "saint" forever is truly to be in Heaven. One however can desire to be a saint right here right now.

We just completed the beautiful novena of the HOLY CHILD (Santo Nino). We put forward to God our personal prayers and petitions for nine continuous evenings culminating in the full celebration of the Feast of the Holy Child last Sunday (the 4 pm Mass was packed). Every day we prayed for the miraculous healing of 6-year Naomi fighting a growing, inoperable brain tumor. Every day, one of my personal prayers was for me "TO BECOME A SAINT" and to help OTHERS to become saints too!

In one way or another, we all look for PEACE! We may use the word Peace or Happiness as identical or interchangeable as we describe our purpose in life. However, they are quite distinct. Happiness can be superficial and short-lived. Peace however is lasting and brings that inner joy inside our hearts. We can find happiness in worldly activities. We can find Peace only with God.

Not only do we want peace for our own families and ourselves but also we want peace for everyone, peace for the whole world. At the end of every daily Mass, as we expose the Blessed Sacrament for one Holy Hour, we conclude with that very prayer for "PEACE in our hearts, in our families, in our communities, in our church, in our country". We are far from that universal peace but we know that Peace begins with ourselves, and then spreads within our own families. In my 10 years of priesthood, I have learned about the struggles that many families go through, but I have also learned that with God, everything is possible and major difficulties can be turned around in closer relationships with Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit. With God, every day is a day filled with HOPE FOR ALL!

I hope that many of you have begun to read "REDISCOVER THE SAINTS". Every feedback I have received so far has been very positive and I look forward to an inspiring discussion on THURSDAY JANUARY 30 (7 pm Father Martin Hall). Come to the meeting to share your favorite saint and question. I love St Francis of Assisi (many times we sing His Prayer at daily Mass) but I was puzzled by the subtitle

"Dissatisfied" and the question in chapter 7: "*What are you dissatisfied with at this time in your life?*" Take a moment to reflect on that question.

By addressing our dissatisfactions, Matthew Kelly invites us to consider them within the entire story of our lives and to discover which new direction God is now suggesting to us. "*As a young man, Francis became profoundly dissatisfied with his life. He had spent his youth being the life of the party, but that began to leave him feeling empty. This emptiness led him to a belief that there simply must be MORE TO LIFE ... Francis followed the SPIRIT and rebelled in a truly wild and rebellious way.*" (Chapter 7, p 39). He then heard God saying to him "REBUILD MY CHURCH" and reacted by literally rebuilding a dilapidated church. This was his first response to God's call. "*But once he had finished rebuilding the church near his home, he continued hearing God saying to him REBUILD MY CHURCH . . . This led him to the awareness that God was inviting him to REBUILD THE CHURCH SPIRITUALLY. He dedicated the rest of his life to SPIRITUAL RENEWAL.*" This was St. Francis' response.

Like St Francis of Assisi, we are all in need of spiritual renewal. We need such spiritual renewal to become saints. We need to act today. Tomorrow may be too late. ..It may be the end of time! We need to respond to the signs that God sends us today, including signs of dissatisfaction that can prompt us to a transforming action. Every day is new day, a new beginning.

LET US PRAY that every day will be for us a new beginning in the Joy of Christ: the good news is that God loves each of us, that He dies for our sins on the Cross, and then He rises so that we too can rise with Him and have ETERNAL LIFE WITH HIM! Let us pray that the HOLY SPIRIT can guide our daily desires and actions! HOLY SPIRIT, help each of us to desire being a saint. May we be inspired by the lives of saints, like St Francis, to have the courage to follow God's will and redirect our own lives. O God, help us to stretch our desires in new directions leading us to YOU!

One in Christ,
Father Alain