



Dear Friends



WHAT HAPPENED?

For those of you who have been reading our Newsletters with regularity, you may well be wondering why you haven't received one since the Winter of 2018. Has someone just been lazy, or on the other hand, too busy? I'm afraid that the latter is the case, and even now we wonder if this Newsletter with get into print!

You know that our Life calls for six hours of solitary prayer daily, plus the Celebration of the Eucharist and the Divine Office, and with what seemingly urgent needs pop up, time for a Newsletter doesn't seem to fit in. Nevertheless, we want to speak about some things that have happened during this period and also what seems to be happening right now, aside from Covid-19.

SOCIETY OF OUR MOTHER OF PEACE



Of course we find ourselves now right at the end of Lent, and we may be wondering what has been accomplished during Lent.

From the standpoint of doing penance for our sins, and also doing extra mortifications to plead God's mercy on other sinners, something has been accomplished. But of course the more important issue is: Have we grown spiritually? Now we don't have any electronic meters to indicate that, and yet there is something in our spirits which can tell us about it. We know that we can engage in some acts of penance or spiritual exercises and not find, after we have finished them, that our spirits have somehow risen. So what we need to be thinking about concerning whatever spiritual exercises we engage in is what we will take with us after these particular exercises are no longer taking place. To put it crudely, if we gobble up the chocolate Easter bunnies when Easter comes, it may mean that we felt good about Lent, but now all its effects are over.

What we want to be looking for after Lent is whether we are doing what we do more for God and

less for ourselves, or more in the awareness of God's loving presence than before we started Lent. Growth is really determined by our level of intimacy with and generosity toward God, not by the degree of our sweet feelings toward Him, but our will to live more intimately with Him, with an awareness that our attachment to things diminishes our capacity to be intimate with Him: "No man can serve two masters..."

What we are fundamentally getting down to is the quality of our prayer. We may ask ourselves: "Do we say prayers, or pray prayers?" --- and the difference is radical. In saying prayers, we can just do them, while in praying prayers we seek to enter into loving relationship with God. In just grasping that distinction, we could be opening our minds and hearts to quite a new vista of development. The deepest prayer is that which is closest to what we will be doing in Heaven. Now that sounds alright, but rather simplistic. But if we weigh the matter carefully, we know that in Heaven we will simply be lovingly appreciating God -- and that is what we want to be doing, as much as grace enables us, in the time of formal prayer. And actually,

to the degree that our limited minds are capable, even outside of prayer. We want to live as consciously as we can, by grace, in the loving presence of God: this is a heavenly life on earth and the happiest we can live, because it is involving us in the Source of infinite happiness and Goodness and Lovableness.

And so we may ask: Who is called to this level of life? Jesus answers in the same words of the Old Testament: The first and the greatest Commandment is to love the Lord your God with your whole heart, your whole soul, your whole mind and all your strength. This is the under-girding of loving

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