



A message to the faithful of the archdiocese from Archbishop Michael Jackels

21 August 2019, 9:00 AM

Part 6: Call to holiness

Some people think that being holy means saying lots of prayers, not having any fun, and maybe being timid or weak; we don't find that very attractive.

However, the true measure of holiness is not saying many and long prayers, but the imitation of Christ.

And Jesus was anything but timid or weak; for example, his readiness to forgive led him to sacrifice his life on the cross out of mercy for sinners like us.

Moreover, Jesus was no stranger to fun; after all, his first miracle was to change water into wine, which he did out of love for people at a wedding feast.

Part of our imitation of Christ is to live out his teaching and example of what are called the evangelical (gospel) counsels of poverty, chastity, and obedience.

Most people think of those as vows that people are invited to make if they want to become members of religious communities, like the SVDs, or Trappists.

And most people only think of poverty, chastity and obedience as having to do with money, sex, and obeying someone else's will.

But all the followers of Jesus are invited to live by the evangelical counsels as a way of responding to the universal call to holiness.

And so there has to be a way for single and married people, religious and priests to practice the evangelical counsels; there is: Living a shared life (poverty) of self-gift (chastity) in service of others (obedience).

The only difference in practice is based on our state in life: with whom we live a shared life; to whom we give the gift of self; for whom we serve and sacrifice.

Living a shared life of self-gift in service of another, in imitation of Jesus, is the best, easiest, fastest way to grow in holiness and make progress toward heaven.

Michael Jackels

Archbishop of Dubuque
