



MAY JESUS CHRIST BE PRAISED!

FEB. 16, 2020 / 6TH SUNDAY ORDINARY TIME

Spiritual Ponderings:

Mass and Evangelization III

A few years ago, a group of ex-Protestant ministers now Catholics gathered together and wrote a series of articles about what attracted them to the Catholic Church. They called the series *Catholic for a Reason*. The third volume of this series was titled: *Catholic for a Reason III: Scripture and the Mystery of the Mass* and focused on what it was about the Mass that they found so inspiring. For the month of February I have decided to reflect with you on an article titled "The Mass and Evangelization" and it was written by Curtis Martin. Quotes from his article will be in bold and my commentary will be in normal font.



If we take a deeper look, we can see at least six reasons (3 this week and 3 last week) why many Catholics are hesitant to share either faith with others.

4. If you don't live it, you can't give it. Witness is absolutely essential. As Saint Francis of Assisi stated, "Preach the Gospel at all times, if necessary use words." Our words mean little if they don't flow from a transformed life. You cannot give that which you do not have.

I think sometime living it and being good at it are two different things. A baseball player batting 300 is good at baseball despite only hitting 1 out of 3. He still goes and tries to improve. In the same way we strive to bat 1,000 but most of us are lucky if we do God's will 1 out of 3 times. We should not become discouraged but devote ourselves to figuring out how we can improve. For example studying what makes one become angry and lose patience can help us develop tools that will help us avoid losing patience in the future. So even though we are not perfect living our faith we should still be willing to invite others to join us on the journey of faith.

5. We may not love Christ, the Church, or others enough. "Our love for Jesus and for our neighbor impels us to speak to others about our faith" (Catechism 166). We believe that Jesus is truly God, "And there is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven that has been given among men, by which they may be saved" (Acts 4:12). We see the Church, not as a mere human institution, but as the very Family of God, the Mystical Body of Christ, the Bride of Christ and our Mother, as Saint Cyprian said, "He can no longer have God for his Father, who has not the Church for his Mother." Therefore, how can we withhold this good news from others, if we truly love them?

It is hard belonging to an institution that says we should love our enemies. I would much rather belong to an institution that says "wreak vengeance" upon your enemies. I also know from experience that vengeance never solves anything and I end up more hurt than if I would just have said a prayer for the person.

6. We don't know what to say.

When we don't know what to say sometimes it is a call for us to study more and pray more.

All true evangelization is motivated by love: love of God and love of our neighbor.

Remember that love is wanting what is best for the other individuals even if it requires a sacrifice on my part. In the same way we want people to come to know God's love (what is best for them) even if it require me to come out of my comfort zone.

By investing our lives in people, we develop relationships and within those relationships we will have opportunities to share our faith. Evangelists are most successful when they have earned the right to be heard. Friendship is an end in itself; we are called to love people, period. But if we love them, we will share what is most important in our life.

If the Mass is important to you and you live out your faith joyfully then you will find yourself leading other to Christ.

Principles for Starting a Spiritual Conversation

Here are some helpful steps that prepare us to share the Gospel.

- **Pray for opportunities, and for the grace to recognize them.**
- **Take genuine interests in people, and share your love for Jesus with them.**
- **Be courageous in taking risks—this is the key.**
- **Take every opportunity, even split second ones.**
- **Always have an attitude of love—our motivation should be the same as God's**
- **Leave the results to God.**

BREAKING OPEN THE WORD

FEBRUARY 16 2020 ◊ Sixth Sunday in Ordinary Time ◊ Lectionary: 76 ◊ Gospel MT 5:17-37

Jesus said to his disciples: "Do not think that I have come to abolish the law or the prophets. I have come not to abolish but to fulfill. Amen, I say to you, until heaven and earth pass away, not the smallest letter or the smallest part of a letter will pass from the law, until all things have taken place. Therefore, whoever breaks one of the least of these commandments and teaches others to do so will be called least in the kingdom of heaven. But whoever obeys and teaches these commandments will be called greatest in the kingdom of heaven. I tell you, unless your righteousness surpasses that of the scribes and Pharisees, you will not enter the kingdom of heaven. "You have heard that it was said to your ancestors, *You shall not kill; and whoever kills will be liable to judgment.* But I say to you, whoever is angry with his brother will be liable to judgment; and whoever says to his brother, 'Raqa,' will be answerable to the Sanhedrin; and whoever says, 'You fool,' will be liable to fiery Gehenna. Therefore, if you bring your gift to the altar, and there recall that your brother has anything against you, leave your gift there at the altar, go first and be reconciled with your brother, and then come and offer your gift. Settle with your opponent quickly while on the way to court. Otherwise your opponent will hand you over to the judge, and the judge will hand you over to the guard, and you will be thrown into prison. Amen, I say to you, you will not be released until you have paid the last penny. "You have heard that it was said, *You shall not commit adultery.* But I say to you, everyone who looks at a woman with lust has already committed adultery with her in his heart. If your right eye causes you to sin, tear it out and throw it away. It is better for you to lose one of your members than to have your whole body thrown into Gehenna. And if your right hand causes you to sin, cut it off and throw it away. It is better for you to lose one of your members than to have your whole body go into Gehenna. "It was also said, *Whoever divorces his wife must give her a bill of divorce.* But I say to you, whoever divorces his wife -- unless the marriage is unlawful -- causes her to commit adultery, and whoever marries a divorced woman commits adultery. "Again you have heard that it was said to your ancestors, *Do not take a false oath, but make good to the Lord all that you vow.* But I say to you, do not swear at all; not by heaven, for it is God's throne; nor by the earth, for it is his footstool; nor by Jerusalem, for it is the city of the great King. Do not swear by your head, for you cannot make a single hair white or black. Let your 'Yes' mean 'Yes,' and your 'No' mean 'No.' Anything more is from the evil one."

Spiritual Reflection: The truth is, of course, that the curtness of the Ten Commandments is an evidence, not of the gloom and narrowness of a religion, but, on the contrary, of its liberality and humanity. It is shorter to state the things forbidden than the things permitted; precisely because most things are permitted, and only a few things are forbidden. - Gilbert K. Chesterton. God does not desire to limit our freedom but He does want us to love one another.

Spiritual Questions:

1. How do I understand Jesus as God's faithful witness?
2. Is there a time of day that I experience the presence of the Spirit more?
3. Do I make too much of the "wisdom of this age":
4. How does discernment of spirit require a self-assessment?
5. If we claim to be lights to the world, then what responsibilities do we carry with us.



Thought of the Day

Sunday

Moral principles do not depend on a majority vote. Wrong is wrong, even if everybody is wrong. Right is right, even if nobody is right. - Fulton J. Sheen

Monday

The refusal to take sides on great moral issues is itself a decision. It is a silent acquiescence to evil. The Tragedy of our time is that those who still believe in honesty lack fire and conviction, while those who believe in dishonesty are full of passionate conviction. - Fulton J. Sheen

Tuesday

There are not one hundred people in the United States who hate The Catholic Church, but there are millions who hate what they wrongly perceive the Catholic Church to be. - Fulton J. Sheen

Wednesday

Prayer begins by talking to God, but it ends by listening to Him. In the face of Absolute Truth, silence is the soul's language. - Fulton J. Sheen

Thursday

If you do not worship God, you worship something, and nine times out of ten it will be yourself. You have a duty to worship God, not because He will be imperfect and unhappy if you do not, but because you will be imperfect and unhappy. - Fulton J. Sheen

Friday

It's impossible to lose your footing when you're on your knees. - Fulton J. Sheen

Saturday

Freedom does not mean that right to do whatever we please, but rather to do as we ought. The right to do whatever we please reduces freedom to a physical power and forgets that freedom is a moral power. - Fulton J. Sheen

PRO-LIFE



February 2020

Prayer for People to Answer the Call to be People of Justice

We pray that Christians may do all they can to exert their influence for the cause of the Gospel morality and justice. May they show concern for the poor, the planet, and for peace.

In a special way may they never remain silent when there is a question of preserving life or destroying it, but always let our voice be heard bravely on the side of the God of the living.

God we ask you to be a refuge and fortress for those who have fallen away from the Church.

Please rescue them from what ever evils led them away from your Son's Mystical Body and bring them back to Your Holy Church.



St. Monica Society

Please join us in praying a special prayer each month for Catholics who have fallen away from their faith.

Catholic Prayers

PRAYER FOR ANY NECESSITY.

Show us, we beseech Thee, O Lord, in Thy clemency, Thine unspeakable mercy, that Thou mayest both cleanse us from all our sins, and deliver us from the punishments which they have deserved. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, Thy Son, Who lives and reigns world without end. Amen.

NIGHT PRAYER

God, come to my assistance. Lord make haste to help me. Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and the Holy Spirit; as it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.

O my God, I thank you for having preserved me today and for having given me so many blessings and graces. I renew my dedication to you and ask your pardon for all my sins.

Make a short review of the day, briefly recalling with gratitude the good things that have happened, and repenting in sincere sorrow the sins you have committed.

A NIGHT PRAYER

Eternal Father, I desire to rest in Thy Heart this night. I make the intention of offering to Thee every beat of my heart, joining to them as many acts of love and desire. I pray that even while I am asleep, I will bring back to Thee souls that offend Thee. I ask forgiveness for the whole world, especially for those who know Thee and yet sin. I offer to Thee my every breath and heartbeat as a prayer of reparation.

Amen.



Humor

