



MAY JESUS CHRIST BE PRAISED!

APRIL 4, 2020 / PALM SUNDAY

Spiritual Ponderings:

Growing Old Gracefully

Part I

Greg Barker our Director of Evangelization and Adult Faith Formation suggested that I should read a book written by Richard P. Johnson titled: *A New Vision of Parish Ministry for Maturing Adults: How to Construct, Organize, and Sustain a Vibrant Faith Formation Program for the Second Half of Life*. In this book, Richard Johnson lays out 12 principals for developing a parish ministry geared towards older adults. As I read the book, I began to see some areas of my own faith life that I need to think about as I grow older. I therefore think it would be beneficial for everyone to reflect with me on what it means to growing old within the context of our Catholic Faith no matter what your age is now. Quotes from this book will be in bold. My reflections will be in the normal font.

We live in a culture that suffers from age prejudice. It's not that we don't like old people; on an individual level we may have deep respect and great admiration for a particular older person. On a societal level, however, we tend to fear aging, mistrust it, and think of it as a "thief in the night." This is unfortunate because aging is one of the few things that every living person does every single day. Even the Church suffers from ageism.

Watching my grandmother grow old was a very scary life experience. It was hard to watch a woman who was one of the most independent persons that I had ever know, become first homebound and then bedbound. It was intimidating to be in her presence when she was going through an episode of mental confusion because I did not know what to do to help her. Spending time with my grandmother in her last years are some of my most treasured memories of her. It was a chance for me to give back to her some of the love that she had showered me with over the years. It was a way for me to be the Good Samaritan and help the wounded traveler who had been beaten up through no fault of her own. It was my chance to be Jesus curing the lepers by relieving her of the pains of loneliness. When I hear people talk about euthanasia today, I want to stop and tell the person to get over their fears and simply love the person.

Much too often, spiritually maturing adults see the aging process simply as the secular world sees it: as something that happens to our bodies only. Aging is an extension of the God-ordained lifelong development process of life, and it was is a physical and a mental process. In order to personally, "own" this expanded view of aging, spiritually maturing adults need to transform any regressive attitudes about aging and replace them with life-giving attitudes of light.

Conversion is a part of life as a Catholic. Our faith tells us that a lot of times the values of the world are much different than the values of God and therefore we need to take time to make sure our thoughts and values align with God's and not that of the world. We should see old age as a gift from God – the giver of all good gifts.

Principal #1: Parish ministry for maturing adults pays attention to three dimensions of growth: spiritual, psychological, and physical.

Personal Goal #1: As I grow older, I will make sure I pay attention to maturing spiritually, psychologically, and physically.

In the seminary we talked about the four pillars of formation: human, spiritual, psychological, and pastoral. In other words, the seminary wanted us to be well-rounded individuals. In the same way the Church wants all of us to be well-

rounded individuals. Saint Irenaeus of Lyon said that the “Glory of God was a person fully alive.” Growing old therefore does not mean we should diminish but rather we should flourish in all areas of our lives. I should plan on going on a yearly retreat as well as a yearly physical. I should make sure I take time to pray every day and I should take time to make sure I take my medication on time.

Principal #2: Parish ministry for maturing adults should be a part of the parish plan, well organized, and consistent in offering services that people will come to count on.

Personal Goal #2: I will find ways to face my senior years as prepared as possible.

One of the hardest things to do in leading a parish is to make sure every area of parish life is being address. I like using the phrase of “zone defense”. This is part of the reason; I like the fact that we at St. Joseph have a director of Adult Faith Formation. I think it is also important though for older people to seek out opportunities within the parish to help them grow for example, as a PSR catechist or Children’s Liturgy of the Word leader. One learns and develops a sense of community as one teaches the next generation.

Principal #3 Parish ministry for maturing adults employs styles of teaching and learning unique to the people being served.

Personal Goal #3: I will focus on being the best version of myself as possible and try not to be someone else. I will appreciate my experience of growing up without comparing myself with others.

We need to make sure that we do not have a one program fits all type mentality. I love parishes that have a senior group that older adults can participate in but I also like the fact that many parishes have a Knights of Columbus and a retreat program like ACTS or Christ Renews His Parish.

BREAKING OPEN THE WORD



April 05 2020 Palm Sunday of the Lord's Passion

At The Procession With Palms - Gospel 35 YEAR A MT 21:1-11

When Jesus and the disciples drew near Jerusalem and came to Bethphage on the Mount of Olives, Jesus sent two disciples, saying to them, “Go into the village opposite you, and immediately you will find an ass tethered, and a colt with her. Untie them and bring them here to me. And if anyone should say anything to you, reply, ‘The master has need of them.’ Then he will send them at once.” This happened so that what had been spoken through the prophet might be fulfilled: *Say to daughter Zion, “Behold, your king comes to you, meek and riding on an ass, and on a colt, the foal of a beast of burden.”* The disciples went and did as Jesus had ordered them. They brought the ass and the colt and laid their cloaks over them, and he sat upon them. The very large crowd spread their cloaks on the road, while others cut branches from the trees and strewed them on the road. The crowds preceding him and those following kept crying out and saying: “Hosanna to the Son of David; blessed is the he who comes in the name of the Lord; hosanna in the highest.” And when he entered Jerusalem the whole city was shaken and asked, “Who is this?” And the crowds replied, “This is Jesus the prophet, from Nazareth in Galilee.”

Spiritual Reflection: No pain, no palm; no thorns, no throne; no gall, no glory; no cross, no crown. – William Penn

Spiritual Questions

1. What part of the Passion narrative touches me the most?
2. What part of Holy Week engages me the most?
3. Do I see Holy Week as transformative?
4. Will the celebration of this week energize me? Why or Why not?
5. Why did Jesus ride into Jerusalem in a “meek” manner?



Thought of the Day

- Sunday** "The tragedy of the passion brings to fulfilment our own life and the whole of human history. We can't let Holy Week be just a kind of commemoration. It means contemplating the mystery of Jesus Christ as something which continues to work in our souls." –St. Josemaria Escriva
- Monday** "O souls! Seek a refuge, like pure doves, in the shadow of the crucifix. There, mourn the Passion of your divine Spouse, and drawing from your hearts flames of love and rivers of tears, make of them a precious balm with which to anoint the wounds of your Saviour." -St. Paul of the Cross
- Tuesday** "We give glory to you, Lord, who raised up your cross to span the jaws of death like a bridge by which souls might pass from the region of the dead to the land of the living. ..You are incontestably alive. Your murderers sowed your living body in the earth as farmers sow grain, but it sprang up and yielded an abundant harvest of men raised from the dead." –St. Ephrem the Syrian
- Wednesday** "The death of the Lord our God should not be a cause of shame for us; rather, it should be our greatest hope, our greatest glory. In taking upon himself the death that he found in us, he has most faithfully promised to give us life in him, such as we cannot have of ourselves." - St. Augustine
- Thursday** "Do not abandon yourselves to despair. We are the Easter people and hallelujah is our song." - Pope St. John Paul II
- Friday** "True reverence for the Lord's passion means fixing the eyes of our heart on Jesus crucified and recognizing in him our own humanity." –Pope St. Leo the Great
- Saturday** "Why did you suffer for me, dear Jesus? For love! The nails...the crown...the cross...all for the love of me!" –St. Gemma Galgani

PRO-LIFE



April 2020

We pray to you Lord who loves justice and righteousness may be the strength and guiding light of world leaders so all life may be considered sacred and all people may walk in the ways of life and peace. We implore you Lord.

For all who have given into the temptation and doubt that the Lord may strengthen them and may enable us to assist them as they face the trials of their faith journey. May they come to know the Lord's mercy. -

Amen



St. Monica Society

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

Catholic Prayers

THE LITANY OF THE HOLY CROSS.

Lord, have mercy. Lord, have mercy.
 Christ, have mercy. Christ, have mercy.
 Lord, have mercy. Lord, have mercy.

Christ, hear us. Christ, graciously hear us.
 God the Father of Heaven, Have mercy on us.
 God the Son, Redeemer of the world, Have mercy on us.

God the Holy Ghost, our Advocate, Have mercy on us.
 Holy Trinity, one God, Have mercy on us.
 Holy Cross where the Lamb of God was offered, Save us,
 O Holy Cross.
 Hope of Christians, Save us, O Holy Cross.
 Pledge of the resurrection of the dead, Save us, O Holy
 Cross.
 Shelter of persecuted innocence, Save us, O Holy Cross.
 Guide of the blind, Save us, O Holy Cross.
 Way of those who have gone astray, Save us, O Holy
 Cross.
 Staff of the lame, Save us, O Holy Cross.
 Consolation of the poor, Save us, O Holy Cross.
 Restraint of the powerful, Save us, O Holy Cross.
 Destruction of the proud, Save us, O Holy Cross.
 Refuge of sinners, Save us, O Holy Cross.
 Trophy of victory over Hell, Save us, O Holy Cross.
 Terror of demons, Save us, O Holy Cross.
 Mistress of youth, Save us, O Holy Cross.
 Succor of the distressed, Save us, O Holy Cross.
 Hope of the hopeless, Save us, O Holy Cross.
 Star of the mariner, Save us, O Holy Cross.
 Harbor of the wrecked, Save us, O Holy Cross.
 Rampart of the besieged, Save us, O Holy Cross.
 Father of orphans, Save us, O Holy Cross.
 Defense of widows, Save us, O Holy Cross.
 Counsel of the just, Save us, O Holy Cross.
 Judge of the wicked, Save us, O Holy Cross.
 Rest of the afflicted, Save us, O Holy Cross.
 Safeguard of childhood, Save us, O Holy Cross.
 Strength of manhood, Save us, O Holy Cross.
 Last hope of the aged, Save us, O Holy Cross.
 Light of those who sit in darkness, Save us, O Holy
 Cross.
 Splendor of kings, Save us, O Holy Cross.
 Civilizer of the world, Save us, O Holy Cross.
 Shield impenetrable, Save us, O Holy Cross.
 Wisdom of the foolish, Save us, O Holy Cross.
 Liberty of slaves, Save us, O Holy Cross.
 Knowledge of the ignorant, Save us, O Holy Cross.
 Sure rule of life, Save us, O Holy Cross.
 Heralded by prophets, Save us, O Holy Cross.
 Preached by apostles, Save us, O Holy Cross.
 Glory of martyrs, Save us, O Holy Cross.
 Study of hermits, Save us, O Holy Cross.
 Chastity of virgins, Save us, O Holy Cross.

Joy of priests, Save us, O Holy Cross.
 Foundation of the Church, Save us, O Holy Cross.
 Salvation of the world, Save us, O Holy Cross.
 Destruction of idolatry, Save us, O Holy Cross.
 Stumbling block to the Jews, Save us, O Holy Cross.
 Condemnation of the ungodly, Save us, O Holy Cross.
 Support of the weak, Save us, O Holy Cross.
 Medicine of the sick, Save us, O Holy Cross.
 Health of the leprous, Save us, O Holy Cross.
 Strength of the paralytic, Save us, O Holy Cross.
 Bread of the hungry, Save us, O Holy Cross.
 Fountain of those who thirst, Save us, O Holy Cross.
 Clothing of the naked, Save us, O Holy Cross.
 4 Lamb of God, Who takest away the sins of the world,
 Spare us, O Lord.
 Lamb of God, Who takest away the sins of the world,
 Hear us, O Lord.
 Lamb of God, Who takest away the sins of the world,
 Have mercy on us.
 Christ, hear us. Christ, graciously hear us.
 Lord, have mercy. Christ, have mercy.
 Lord, have mercy.
 V. We adore Thee, O Christ, and we bless Thee,
 R. Because by Thy Holy Cross Thou hast redeemed the
 world.

ALL TOGETHER:

Behold the Cross of the Lord! Begone ye evil powers!
 The Lion of the tribe of Juda, the Root of David, has
 conquered!
 Alleluia!

LET US PRAY:

O God, Who for the redemption of the world, was
 pleased to be born in a stable and to die upon a cross; O
 Lord Jesus Christ, by Thy holy sufferings, which we, Thy
 unworthy servants, call to mind: by Thy Holy Cross, and
 by Thy death,
 deliver us from the pains of Hell, and vouchsafe to
 conduct us whither Thou didst conduct the good thief
 who was crucified with Thee, Who lives and reigns
 eternally in Heaven. R. Amen.
 Sweet the wood, sweet the nails, sweet the Burden
 which thou bear, for thou alone, O Holy Cross, was
 worthy to bear the King and Lord of Heaven.
 R. Amen.



Humor

What do you call a rabbit with fleas? - Bugs Bunny.
 Where does the Easter bunny get his eggs? - From eggplant

What is Easter Bunny's favorite kind of music? - Hip-hop, of course!

Why won't Easter eggs go out at night? - They don't want to get "beat up".

Why couldn't the Easter egg family watch T.V.? Because their cable was scrambled.