



MAY JESUS CHRIST BE PRAISED!

APRIL 19, 2020 / DIVINE MERCY

Divine Mercy Blessing!!!

Eternal God, in whom mercy is endless and the treasury of compassion - inexhaustible, look kindly upon us and increase Your mercy in us, that in difficult moments we might not despair nor become despondent, but with great confidence submit ourselves to Your holy will, which is Love and Mercy itself. Amen.

Spiritual Ponderings:

Growing Old Gracefully

Part III

Using Richard Johnson's book: *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*, we have been reflecting on what it means to grow old gracefully. Richard Johnson lays out 12 principals for developing a parish ministry geared towards older adults. Quotes from this book will be in bold. My reflections will be in the normal font.

Principal #7 The goal of parish ministry for maturing adults is spiritual transformation.

Personal Goal #7: I will look at aging as an opportunity to grow closer to God and not a curse. I should not be surprised that God wants to make me into something better.

So often we become blinded by our worldly attitudes that over-value personal achievement, production, and vocational performance above all other values. Too easily we equate young with heightened performance and older with diminished performance. While such beliefs may dimly reflect reality on the form level, they clearly do not approach reality on a spiritual level.

Catholicism always sees each person as a person and that each person has innate God-given dignity that can never be tarnished by what we do. All human beings are equally loved and treasured by God. The sad part is that we often devalue people in our mind. God did not hold "age" against Abraham, Sarah, Hannah, or Elizabeth.

Transformative learning allows us to realign our true selves with God.

The more positive one is with his or her self-esteem the more he or she will live a more fulfilling life. The Gospel as St. John tells us is that God did not send the Son into the world to condemn us but to save us and give life eternal (John 3:16). The voices of self-condemnation are not the voice of God.

Principal #8 The content of programs offered in a parish ministry for maturing adults rises out of the real situations in which such people live, including moments of transitions and daily life.

Personal Goal #8: I will apply my spiritual life to my real life. I will act the same way Saturday afternoon as I am on Sunday morning. There will be no duplicity within me.

Developing a new perspective on sickness makes all the difference in how spiritually maturing adults see themselves... Wellness is an all-encompassing notion that includes finding fulfillment on three levels of mature human living. The first level of wellness is on the physical level we simply call the "well". The second aspect of

wellness is wellness of the mind which we call "Wisdom." The third aspect of wellness resides on the spiritual level of the soul, which we call "whole". At every life step and stage, we seek to become well, wise, and whole. This is particularly important in the maturing years for its here that one has developed an adequate level of maturation necessary to really get a grip on these three aspects of wellness in a comprehensive way.

I want to be a person of authenticity and integrity and this can only happen if I allow God to give me my identity. If I focus too much on what others think of me, I will find myself acting differently with different groups of people. This is not always easy because we often desire affirmation.

Principal #9 Parish ministry for maturing adults focuses on both interior and exterior growth.

Personal Goal #9: I will try to keep myself physically fit and spiritually on fire for God.

The changes that later life bring can be received as opportunities or as threats. The purpose of later life is to usher in a renewal of spirit where a new forum for growth and happiness can emerge... Growth and happiness flow from the quest to discover new purpose, new meaning, and new life.

As we live our lives change will enter our lives and we will be forced to change. We cannot all stay at home with our parents forever, we can keep our children from growing up, we cannot stop the aging process, etc. This means that we can either embrace these changes as opportunities or we can see them as curses. If we see them as opportunities and trust that God is with us in them, we can grow through these experiences. I think a prime example of this is seeing how many older adults have found joy in becoming grandparents.

Growing older means that I have to take care of myself physically because I get to be alive or it becomes a chore that I can neglect. I know that I take care of myself better the more grateful I am for all that God has done for me.

BREAKING OPEN THE WORD



April 19 2020 – 2nd Sun of Easter (or Sunday of Divine Mercy) Lectionary: 43 Gospel JN 20:19-31

On the evening of that first day of the week, when the doors were locked, where the disciples were, for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood in their midst and said to them, "Peace be with you." When he had said this, he showed them his hands and his side. The disciples rejoiced when they saw the Lord. Jesus said to them again, "Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I send you." And when he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, "Receive the Holy Spirit. Whose sins you forgive are forgiven them, and whose sins you retain are retained." Thomas, called Didymus, one of the Twelve, was not with them when Jesus came. So the other disciples said to him, "We have seen the Lord." But he said to them, "Unless I see the mark of the nails in his hands and put my finger into the nailmarks and put my hand into his side, I will not believe." Now a week later his disciples were again inside and Thomas was with them. Jesus came, although the doors were locked, and stood in their midst and said, "Peace be with you." Then he said to Thomas, "Put your finger here and see my hands, and bring your hand and put it into my side, and do not be unbelieving, but believe." Thomas answered and said to him, "My Lord and my God!" Jesus said to him, "Have you come to believe because you have seen me? Blessed are those who have not seen and have believed." Now, Jesus did many other signs in the presence of his disciples that are not written in this book. But these are written that you may come to believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that through this belief you may have life in his name.

Spiritual Reflection:

"The Cross had asked the questions; the Resurrection had answered them...The Cross had asked: "Why does God permit evil and sin to nail Justice to a tree?" The Resurrection answered: "That sin, having done its worst, might exhaust itself and this be overcome by Love that is stronger than either sin or death." -Archbishop Fulton Sheen. God's forgiveness is greater than our sins.

Spiritual Questions

1. When I recall my vocation story, how has God been merciful to me?
2. What is locked in my own "upper room" and how can I let Christ in?

3. Am I in touch with my personal doubts about God's merciful presence and how do I deal with them?
 4. What barriers (walls) does God have to go through in order to reach me?
 5. What do I expect to get in return by believing in the Risen Christ?
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Thought of the Day

Sunday

Oh, how great is the goodness of God, greater than we can understand. There are moments and there are mysteries of the divine mercy over which the heavens are astounded. Let our judgment of souls cease, for God's mercy upon them is extraordinary. - Mary Faustina Kowalska

Monday

The hardness of God is kinder than the softness of men, and His compulsion is our liberation. - C. S. Lewis

Tuesday

I feel a great desire to abandon myself with greater trust to the Divine Mercy and to place my hope in God alone. - Pio of Pietrelcina

Wednesday

There is nothing more man needs than Divine Mercy - that love which is benevolent, which is compassionate, which raises man above his weakness to the infinite heights to the holiness of God. - Pope John Paul II

Thursday

May both of them [Saint John XXIII and Saint John Paul II] teach us not to be scandalized by the wounds of Christ and to enter ever more deeply into the mystery of divine mercy, which always hopes and always forgives, because it always loves. - Pope Francis

Friday

If we should be saved and become saints, we ought always to stand at the gates of the Divine mercy to beg and pray for, as alms, all that we need. - Alphonsus Liguori

Saturday

Trust the past to the mercy of God, the present to His love, and the future to His providence. - Saint Augustine

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 DIVINE MERCY LITANY

R: I trust in you.

Divine Mercy, gushing forth from the bosom of the Father, **R.**
Divine Mercy, greatest attribute of God, **R.**
Divine Mercy, incomprehensible mystery, **R.**
Divine Mercy, fountain gushing forth from the mystery of the Most Blessed Trinity, **R.**
Divine Mercy, unfathomed by any intellect, human or angelic, **R.**
Divine Mercy, from which wells forth all life and happiness, **R.**
Divine Mercy, better than the heavens, **R.**
Divine Mercy, source of miracles and wonders, **R.**
Divine Mercy, encompassing the whole universe, **R.**
Divine Mercy, descending to earth in the Person of the Incarnate Word, **R.**
Divine Mercy, which flowed out from the open wound of the Heart of Jesus, **R.**
Divine Mercy, enclosed in the Heart of Jesus for us, and especially for sinners, **R.**
Divine Mercy, unfathomed in the institution of the Sacred Host, **R.**
Divine Mercy, in the founding of Holy Church, **R.**
Divine Mercy, in the Sacrament of Holy Baptism, **R.**
Divine Mercy, in our justification through Jesus Christ, **R.**
Divine Mercy, accompanying us through our whole life, **R.**
Divine Mercy, embracing us especially at the hour of death, **R.**
Divine Mercy, endowing us with immortal life, **R.**
Divine Mercy, accompanying us every moment of our life, **R.**
Divine Mercy, shielding us from the fire of hell, **R.**
Divine Mercy, in the conversion of hardened sinners, **R.**
Divine Mercy, astonishment for Angels, incomprehensible to Saints, **R.**
Divine Mercy, unfathomed in all the mysteries of God, **R.**
Divine Mercy, lifting us out of every misery, **R.**
Divine Mercy, source of our happiness and joy, **R.**
Divine Mercy, in calling us forth from nothingness to existence, **R.**
Divine Mercy, embracing all the works of His hands, **R.**
Divine Mercy, crown of all of God's handiwork, **R.**
Divine Mercy, in which we are all immersed, **R.**
Divine Mercy, sweet relief for anguished hearts, **R.**
Divine Mercy, only hope of despairing souls, **R.**
Divine Mercy, repose of hearts, peace amidst fear, **R.**
Divine Mercy, delight and ecstasy of holy souls, **R.**
Divine Mercy, inspiring hope against all hope, **R.**

Eternal God, in Whom mercy is endless and the treasury of compassion inexhaustible, look kindly upon us and increase Your mercy in us, that in difficult moments we might not despair nor become despondent, but with great confidence submit ourselves to Your Holy Will, which is Love and Mercy itself. Amen.



Humor

Actual Bulletin Bloopers.

- This being Easter Sunday, we will ask Mrs. Lewis to come forward and lay an egg on the altar.
- The service will close with "Little Drops Of Water." One of the ladies will start quietly, and the rest of the congregation will join in.

- Next Sunday, a special collection will be taken to defray the cost of the new carpet. All those wishing to do something on the new carpet will come forward and get a piece of paper.
- The ladies of the church have cast off clothing of every kind and they may be seen in the church basement Friday.
- A bean supper will be held on Tuesday evening in the church hall. Music will follow.