

February 10, 2019 – Third Sunday Ordinary Time

MAY JESUS CHRIST BE PRAISED
NOW AND FOREVER!!!

SPIRITUAL PONDERINGS

There are many popular television shows out there now based on people taking old houses and other buildings and renovating them. I am particularly fond of the show *Fixer Upper*. Fr. Mallon in his book *Divine Renovation: From a Maintenance to a Mission Parish* speaks of the need to reform the Church in a similar way thus the word “renovation” in the title. On the show *Fixer Upper*, Chip (the lead carpenter) always gets excited for “demolition day”. This is the day in which they go through and rip out anything that will prevent them from remodeling the house. In a similar way Fr. Mallon suggests that there are certain heresies (erroneous ways of thinking about God and Faith) that need to be clean out the Church before we can begin remodeling. I would like to therefore begin my reflections on Fr. Mallon’s book by spending this month looking at these heresies. Quotes from his book will be in bold and my commentary will be in normal font.

1. **“Social Reductionism”**: This is manifested by defining the Gospel and the Church by purely sociological categories, making the Church an instrument of “market liberalism” or Marxist ideology, as found in many expressions of what was known as liberation theology.

“I believe Social Reductionism happens when we turn the Church into a social club. First, I do not mean “a club for the elite” when I use the term “social club”. There is nothing wrong with belonging to such a club. I am using this term to refer to groups and organizations that exist to help connect people socially for example, the Elks, The Lions, Boy Scouts of America, etc. The Church’s primary mission is not to be a social club but is rather to point, guide, and assist people to develop a personal relationship with Christ that will lead them to eternal life. While it is nice that the Church has a social aspect to it, socializing is not the Church’s primary reason for existence.

We are often like people who live in a black-and-white world who cannot begin to conceive of the reality of color. The fact that so many Catholics are utterly convinced that they are missing nothing shows that the weekly experience of faith and “religion” acts as a kind of vaccine to the full power the Christian faith. Many who are no longer held in the clutches of duty, guilt, or fear walk away, rejecting a hollow version of the real thing. As a result, we have all too often capitulated as leaders and formed pastoral methodologies designed to feed those who have no hunger. We give in to pressure from distracted and bored parishioners to preach shorter and shorter homilies, aware that many would be quite pleased if we just dispensed with the whole thing completely and got to the communion it so that the mad dash to the parking lot could commence.

THOUGHT OF THE DAY

Sunday

That we may obey the Lord’s command to launch out into the deep, leaving the safe seashore of a shallow spiritual life for the adventure He has in store for us.

Monday

Bad evangelism says: I’m right, you’re wrong, and I would love to tell you about it - Timothy Keller

Tuesday

The Bible lays out the fundamental moral principles of how to affront the ecological question. The human person, made in God’s image, is superior to all other earthly creatures, which should in turn be used responsibly. Christ’s incarnation and his teachings testify to the value of nature: Nothing that exists in this world is outside the divine plan of creation and redemption.

Wednesday

Sin is looking for the right thing in the wrong place. - Saint Augustine

Growing up, my grandmother would have all of us over for dinner on Sunday nights. After dinner the adults would play cards and the kids would go out and play in the yard. My dad, though would arrive just in time to eat and as soon as he finished eating, he would go home. He missed out on so much because he saw Sunday night dinner as an social obligation instead of an opportunity to build relationships.

2. "Psychologizing": Pope Francis here identified the trend in the decades following the Second Vatican Council in many houses of formation and retreat centers, whereby an "immanent, self-centered" psychology replaced "the encounter with Jesus Christ" as the foundation of Christian life.

As someone who has battled depression all his life and has learned to deal with it, I have a lot of faith in psychology. It is important though for me to admit that I cannot simply mentally pull myself up by my bootstraps. I need God's grace. Only my relationship with Jesus will ultimately save my soul from hell.

"Psychologizing" would be not recognizing the truth of the following quote from Ernest Kurtz & Katherine Ketcham's book *The Spirituality of Imperfection: Storytelling and the Search for Meaning: According to the way of life that flows from this insight, it is only by ceasing to play God, by coming to terms with errors and shortcomings, and by accepting the inability to control every aspect of their lives that alcoholics (or any human beings) can find the peace and serenity that alcohol (or other drugs, or sex, money material possessions, power or privilege) promise but never deliver.*

Questions to Ponder:

1. How is the Church more than a social club?
2. What happens when we treat the Church as a social club?
3. How is the Church more than a self-improvement program?
4. What happens when we treat the Church as a self-improvement program?
5. What do drugs and God have in common?

Thursday

Love until it hurts. Real love is always painful and hurts: then it is real and pure. - Mother Teresa

Friday

Afraid, self-absorbed, caring for themselves and not God, Adam and Eve began to act like the serpent, accusing each other, defending their actions and forgetting what God was really like. They believed the lie. They could no longer trust God with their lives. The serpent had stolen their hearts. - Neal Lozano

Saturday

Sin is believing the lie that you are self-created, self-dependent and self-sustained. - Saint Augustine



BREAKING OPEN THE WORD

February 10 2019 Fifth Sunday in Ordinary Time Lectionary: 75 Gospel LK 5:1-11

While the crowd was pressing in on Jesus and listening to the word of God, he was standing by the Lake of Gennesaret. He saw two boats there alongside the lake; the fishermen had disembarked and were washing their nets. Getting into one of the boats, the one belonging to Simon, he asked him to put out a short distance from the shore. Then he sat down and taught the crowds from the boat. After he had finished speaking, he said to Simon, "Put out into deep water and lower your nets for a catch." Simon said in reply, "Master, we have worked hard all night and have caught nothing, but at your command I will lower the nets." When they had done this, they caught a great number of fish and their nets were tearing. They signaled to their partners in the other boat to come to help them. They came and filled both boats so that the boats were in danger of sinking. When Simon Peter saw this, he fell at the knees of Jesus and said, "Depart from me, Lord, for I am a sinful man." For astonishment at the catch of fish they had made seized him and all those with him, and likewise James and John, the sons of Zebedee, who were partners of Simon. Jesus said to Simon, "Do not be afraid; from now on you will be catching men." When they brought their boats to the shore, they left everything and followed him.

Spiritual Ponderings:

I am always amazed at how people feel the need to explain why they committed the sins they did in the Sacrament of Reconciliation. Nowhere in the ritual is this called for and I am afraid that this is somehow an unconscious attempt of their part to beg (earn or win by pleading for it) for God's mercy when God simply desires to give it to them. Peter simply says "Lord, I am a sinful man." And Jesus forgives him and makes Peter a co-worker with him. All that is required for forgiveness is a contrite heart and a willingness to ask God for it in the Sacrament of Reconciliation.

Spiritual Questions

1. Why is God so forgiving?
2. When was the last time you went to Confession?
3. If you avoid the Sacrament why? If you go often – do you thank God for His mercy?
4. What helps you recognize your sinfulness?
5. How can experiencing God's mercy help your faith develop?



A Prayer For Our Leaders

We pray that government leaders in the United States may heed the words of Thomas Jefferson who said: "The care of human life and happiness and not their destruction is the first and only legitimate object of good government." May our leaders stop working to build up a culture of death and begin to build up a culture of life. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.



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

THE PRAYER, MAJESTIC QUEEN OF HEAVEN

Majestic Queen of Heaven and Mistress of the Angels, thou didst receive from God the power and commission to crush the head of Satan; wherefore we humbly beseech thee, send forth the legions of heaven, that, under thy command, they may seek out all evil spirits, engage them everywhere in battle, curb their insolence, and hurl them back into the pit of hell. "Who is like unto God?"

O good and tender Mother, thou shalt ever be our hope and the object of our love guide our lost brothers and sisters back to your Son.

O Mother of God, send forth the holy Angels to defend me and drive far from me the cruel foe.

Holy Angels and Archangels, defend us and keep us.



This Week's Trivia

Identify the following items:

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|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
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1. | 
2. |
| 
3. | 
4. |
- A = Alb B = Amice
C = Chasuble D = Stole

Last Week's Answers

True or False

1. T or F St. Thomas Aquinas was called the "Dumb Ox" by his classmates. True
2. T or F St. Ignatius of Loyola had his conversion experience on a hospital bed after surviving a cannon ball. True
3. T or F One of the titles of St. Joseph is the "Terror of Demons" True
4. T or F St. Luke was a doctor. True

DUC IN ALTUM:

CAUTION

Only read this section if you want to go deeper in your faith

CAUTION

“Christian love draws no distinction between one enemy and another, except that the more bitter our enemy's hatred, the greater his need of love. Be his enmity political or religious, he has nothing to expect from a follower of Jesus but unqualified love. In such love there is not inner discord between the private person and official capacity. In both we are disciples of Christ, or we are not Christians at all.” — Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *The Cost of Discipleship*.

Challenge – Think of one person each day that you had a confrontation with or wished that you had confronted or you consider the person you hate the most and then say a Hail Mary for them.

CATHOLIC PRAYER:

LITANY IN HONOUR OF SAINT THOMAS MORE

Lord, have mercy. Christ, 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, Have mercy on us!

Holy Trinity, One God, Have mercy on us!

Holy Mary, Queen of Martyrs, Pray for Us!

St. Thomas More, Pray for us.

St. Thomas, adorer of Christ's Passion, Pray for us.

St. Thomas, who put prayer before all else, Pray for us.

St. Thomas, devoted husband and father, Pray for us.

St. Thomas, defender of the Church, Pray for us.

St. Thomas, perfect model of friendship, Pray for us.

St. Thomas, impervious to all bribery, Pray for us.

St. Thomas, committed to the common good, Pray for us.

St. Thomas, who revered civil and Divine law, Pray for us.

St. Thomas, who always had death before thine eyes, Pray for us.

St. Thomas, acutely aware of the brevity of life, Pray for us.

St. Thomas, always wary of prosperity and presumption, Pray for us.

St. Thomas, stranger to haughtiness, Pray for us.

St. Thomas, ardent devotee of the Fathers of the Church, Pray for us.

St. Thomas, who loathed idleness, Pray for us.

Joyful and full of humor, Pray for us.

Generous to all, Pray for us.

Friend of the mentally handicapped, Pray for us.

Lover of animals, Pray for us.

Renowned peacemaker, Pray for us.

Stranger to greed, Pray for us.

Civil judge of unimpeachable integrity, Pray for us.

Universal patron of the poor, Pray for us.

Liberator of the downtrodden, Pray for us.

Courageous Martyr who gave up all in fidelity to Christ and His Church, Pray for us.

The king's good servant, but God's first, Pray for us.

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, Graciously 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.

V. Pray for us, St. Thomas More,

R. That we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ.

Let us pray.

O Lord, Thou didst give Thy servant St. Thomas More the courage to remain faithful to his conscience, formed by the teachings of Thy Holy Catholic Church; we ask Thee to give us the courage to follow in his footsteps, by placing prayer before all things, and by courageously remaining faithful to Christ and His Church to the very end, so that we may attain our eternal reward. Amen.

 Humor

And you can't go to Church?



show the games at church?

