



Bringing Home the Word

Twenty-sixth Sunday in Ordinary Time (B)
September 29, 2024

Isn't That a Bit Extreme?

Sr. Dianne Bergant, CSA

No sacrifice is too extreme in pursuit of a dream. We will forego sleep, the enjoyment of a favorite pastime, the company of good friends, even the pleasure of good food. Ask anyone who has spent hours preparing for a recital, trying out for a position on an athletic team, or studying for an entrance exam. The same is true when one's livelihood is involved. Ask farmers, people in the military, teachers, or healthcare workers. Ask new parents, or even those who have been parenting for a long time. If we really value something or someone, no sacrifice is too great—at least for a while—when that cherished goal is in view.

We don't seem as willing to forfeit comfort when negative inclinations are involved, and we all have them: rivalry, jealousy, fury, selfishness, slander, gossip, conceit, to name a few. We know that such pettiness or rank cruelty can harm us as well as those we offend, but too often we seem unwilling to restrain such inclinations.

In today's Gospel passage, Jesus speaks quite strongly to such reticence. Does he really expect us to maim ourselves? Isn't that a bit extreme? The fact is, when we try to purge ourselves of reprehensible behavior it is like cutting off our hand or plucking out our eye. Ask anyone who deals with an addiction. If Jesus asks this of us, it means that we certainly have the strength to do it. †

Sunday Readings

Numbers 11:25-29

[Moses said,] "If only all the people of the LORD were prophets! If only the LORD would bestow his spirit on them!"

James 5:1-6

Come now, you rich, weep and wail over your impending miseries.

Mark 9:38-43, 45, 47-48

[Jesus said,] "For whoever is not against us is for us."

If we really value something or someone, no sacrifice is too great.



A Word from Pope Francis

The disciples would like to hinder a good deed simply because it is performed by someone who does not belong to their group.... Brothers and sisters, every closure tends in fact to keep us at a distance from those who do not think like we do, and this...is the root of many great evils....

ANGELUS, ROME, SEPTEMBER 26, 2021



REFLECTION QUESTIONS



- Is there a habit that keeps you from being your best self?
- Do you want to ask God for the will to change?

Order and Inspiration

Paige Byrne Shortal

There is a tension between Order and Inspiration—both goods, both necessary in the life of the Christian community, both essential to the seeking of wisdom and truth. Inspiration informs and enriches Order. Order tests and directs Inspiration. When Order and Inspiration cooperate, there is possibility for great good.

Consider the efforts of Dorothy Day or Mother Teresa. Dorothy Day was inspired to begin the Catholic Worker movement—to establish places of care for the indigent. There was concern about her apparent association with Socialism and her bishop denied her the title “Catholic.” Dorothy did not abandon the Church as she continued her work, nor did she abandon her dream. She simply persisted until the bishop saw the good of



what she did. Order (the bishop) tested Inspiration (Dorothy Day’s dream).

The case of Mother Teresa is similar. She had a vision of Christ speaking to her from the mouths of the poorest of the poor and she was moved to serve them.

The Archbishop of Calcutta denied her request to engage in this new ministry and asked her to wait a year, and then one more. Mother Teresa complied, prayed, hoped, and continued to petition the Archbishop until he was satisfied that her Inspiration was tested and true.

Imagine if Dorothy Day or Mother Teresa had simply persisted in following their Inspiration without submitting it to Order. Would we know of them now? Would there be Catholic Worker Houses across the land or the Missionaries of Charity, the world-wide religious community founded by Mother Teresa?

The tension between Order and Inspiration is real and both the Keepers of Order and the Inspired Visionaries may suffer. Overcoming this tension and bringing good works to fruition requires patience, humility, listening, desire for the truth, and, above all, charity. †

Wisdom from Catholic UPDATE

From “The Mass Before and After Vatican II” by Fr. Matthew O’Toole

The growing appreciation for the role of sacred Scripture played an important part in Mass reforms at the Second Vatican Council. The conciliar document *Sacrosanctum Concilium* declares: “The treasures of the Bible are to be opened up more lavishly, so that richer fare may be provided for the faithful at the table of God’s word.” (SC 51). The Council Fathers set in motion a revision of the *Lectionary*, the book containing the Scripture readings arranged according to the liturgical seasons. To give the faithful greater exposure to the word of God and the breadth of the Bible, a three-year cycle of Scripture was subsequently instituted for Sunday Masses, and a two-year cycle of readings was created for the weekday liturgies. †

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Faithful God, inspire us to follow the way of Jesus, to live according to his truth, to imitate him that we may have the fullness of life. Amen.

The Redemptorists

WEEKDAY READINGS

September 30—
October 5

Monday, St. Jerome:
Jb 1:6–22 / Lk 9:46–50


Tuesday, St. Thérèse of the Child Jesus:
Jb 3:1–3, 11–17, 20–23 / Lk 9:51–56

Wednesday, Holy Guardian Angels:
Jb 9:1–12, 14–16 / Mt 18:1–5, 10

Thursday, Weekday:
Jb 19:21–27 / Lk 10:1–12

Friday, St. Francis of Assisi:
Jb 38:1, 12–21; 40:3–5 / Lk 10:13–16

Saturday, Weekday:
Jb 42:1–3, 5–6, 12–17 / Lk 10:17–24

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