



Things to Ponder

Postings for December 1 & December 8, 2019

Sunday, December 1, 2019:

Pastor's Note – Our Lord Jesus Christ, King of the Universe

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By Rev. Msgr. Charles J. Parry

November 24, 2019 was the last Sunday of the Church year. We concluded with the magnificent feast of Christ the King! The readings given to us both at daily and Sunday Mass during the past several weeks have focused on what are known as “the last things” – that is: death, judgment, heaven, hell, purgatory, the end of the world, and eternal life.

I certainly have a privileged position as a priest. I have been able to witness time and time again the final days of many a good person. It is difficult to express to you what a wonderful experience it is for me to be a part of the final preparation of the faithful as this earthly life comes to an end and the doorway to eternity is opened. The sacraments of the Anointing of the Sick, Penance and the Holy Eucharist are powerful instruments of grace. There is something quite uplifting to realize that a person has been well prepared for the journey to the eternal banquet even as they rest on their deathbed.

Success in life is not realized in the avoidance of death – if that were true, not one of us could claim victory. However, success can be realized in a proper preparation for the moment of death. Our whole life is a preparation for the final hour. It is for the final hour that we were baptized into the Catholic Faith; it is for the final hour that we utilize as often as we can the sacraments of Penance and Eucharist; it is for the final hour that we were confirmed in the Faith; it is for the final hour that at this moment we live a life of integrity and Christian virtue; it is for the final hour that at this moment we are faithful to the Lord Jesus Christ and His most beloved Church; it is for the final hour that we receive the spiritual benefits offered in the sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick. Part of this sacred preparation is an acceptance that I cannot save myself; Jesus alone forgives sins, and Jesus alone has the ability to give eternal life to whomever He wishes.

Realizing our own powerlessness and the reality of our own sinfulness, we take refuge in the Sacred Heart of Jesus. In His Heart we find a safe harbor and an abundant sea of mercy and forgiveness. While much of the world frets over the shortness of life, in this world, we look forward with great hope and anticipation to the Eternal Banquet of Life in the Kingdom of Heaven – what a great gift Our Lord has in store for those who believe

in Him! Praised be Christ the King!

We give thanks to the Lord for His mercy endures forever! May the Lord bless and protect each of you in the week ahead.

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Posting for Sunday, December 8, 2019:

You Only Live Once

By Judi Moreo

Excerpt from You Are More Than Enough

You have a right and even a responsibility to be happy. Happiness is a state of mind. Many people let life pass them by because they choose to be unhappy. They sit around complaining, worrying, procrastinating, and gossiping about other people instead of making the most of every day. They talk about the past and how it was "back when." Some of them live in the state of "one time." "One time" we did this and "one time" we did that. People who talk and think mainly about the past don't move forward. They seem to think they will repeat past happiness by reliving their old experiences. In the meantime, their real life circumstances aren't very happy.

How sad that they are reminiscing about how life was "back when" and aren't living each day to its fullest now. Why aren't they trying to make themselves happy today? They don't have a clue how difficult it is for others to be around them. We've probably heard their stories a dozen times and while we weren't particularly interested the first time, we certainly didn't want to hear the same stories the third or fourth time. These people don't really have any concern for whether their stories are interesting to us or not. They are talking because they want to relive their experiences.

Other people talk about "someday when." "Someday when" I make a lot of money, "someday when" I meet the right person, "someday when" my kids are out of school. But "someday when" comes and there's another "someday when" holding them back. Maybe you are one of these people. If you've ever glorified the future believing when something changes, everything else will be better, then you are guilty of living in the future. If your household income is \$35,000 a year and you talk about how wonderful life will be as soon as you are earning \$50,000 a year, you need to stop right now. You are kidding yourself. By the time you earn \$50,000 per year, you will want or need \$75,000. Your material desires will always outgrow and outpace your income, especially if you are looking to BUY your happiness. The truth is, if you are not happy with yourself, no amount of money will change things. There will always be someone who earns more than you, has more than you, and spends more than you.

Projecting your life into the future is a way of avoiding the present . . . not taking responsibility for now. This is very similar to the state of "if only." "If only" I were thin,

“if only” I had more money, “if only” I had a better education, and the ultimate declaration: “If only” I’d win the lottery. Wishing and waiting are not powerful. They will not bring the changes you seek.

My feeling is “if only” you’d concentrate on what you can do today to take the steps toward what you want to be, do, and have, you’d be a lot happier. You’d be achieving and accomplishing what you want, and you’d be enjoying the journey as well. Whenever we spend too much time in the past or the future, life seems to slip by before we ever accomplish what we want.

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