

3.9.2019

THE LONGING OF ONE'S SOUL FOR GOD

How to Deal with Aloneness

We meet today to discuss the idea of Aloneness in a world filled to capacity with constant stimuli, attentiveness, self-centered customization, and connectivity. The concept of Aloneness is a Common Theme with humans since the perception of Humanity. It has driven individuals and civilizations alike to both greatness and madness.



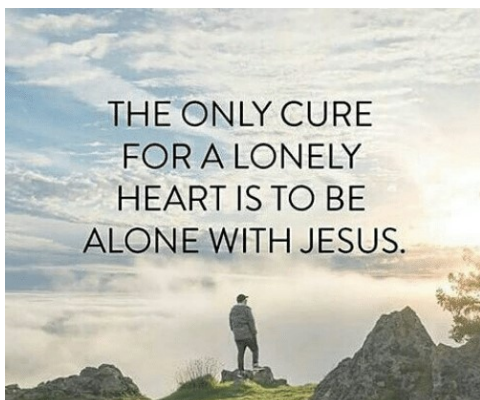
The Aloneness premise can be summed up in a song written in 1847 by a French Parish Priest called "O Holy Night". The following verses speak directly to us.

"Long lay the world
In sin and error pining,
Till He appeared
And the soul felt its worth."

And isn't this the state in which we all once found ourselves? Pining away, lost and dead in our sin, in our deepest and darkest and most silent moments acknowledging if only to ourselves, the great despair of the human condition. And a big chunk of that despair comes, at least in our felt needs, of wondering if there truly is anyone in the universe that values us, that loves us, even when they know us deeply. So, in our sin and error, we pine on.

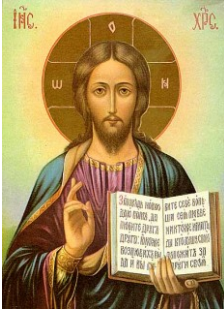
We men have been built from the very core to reflect the image and likeness of God. More so, we have been built with a yearning to be connected to Him. Jesus is the gift that makes that connection.

The potential to satisfy that yearning, hunger and ache to no longer be alone truly exists. That solution deals in the concept that one should be connected with God. Such an improvement in one's life is both quite dramatic not only personally, but to others nearby.



More so, it helps one be a better follower of Jesus Christ.

We are all called to be a Blessing in other's lives, but we must first become the man that God wants us to be. Let us explore how this can happen. Let's listen carefully as we consider the Wisdom of Holy Scripture and Catechism. May God give to each one of us the necessary means to complete His Gift of our Unique and Holy Mission.

**Psalms 42:2-4 Longing for God**

As the deer longs for streams of water, so my soul longs for you, O God. My soul thirsts for God, the living God. When can I enter and see the face of God? My tears have been my bread day and night, as they ask me every day, "Where is your God?"

Matthew 28:16-20 You Are Never Alone

The eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain to which Jesus had ordered them. When they saw him, they worshiped, but they doubted.

Then Jesus approached and said to them, "All power in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, until the end of the age."

The Word of the Lord

Catechism**27 - THE DESIRE FOR GOD**

The desire for God is written in the human heart, because man is created by God and for God; and God never ceases to draw man to himself. Only in God will he find the truth and happiness he never stops searching for:

The dignity of man rests above all on the fact that he is called to communion with God. This invitation to converse with God is addressed to man as soon as he comes into being. For if man exists it is because God has created him through love, and through love continues to hold him in existence. He cannot live fully according to truth unless he freely acknowledges that love and entrusts himself to his creator.

LONG LAY THE WORLD**In sin and error pining**

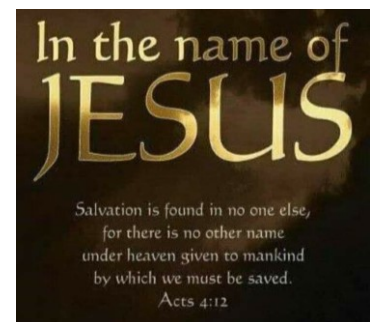
Excerpted from "Joy to the World" by Chris Stefanick

Jesus' first interaction with mankind in the Gospel of John is kind of awkward. He noticed two men following him and stopped, looked straight at them, and said, "What are you looking for?"

I think he wanted them to stop and ask themselves that question before taking another step. Jesus wants us to ask it of ourselves too – because that question is the start of the spiritual journey. More than practically anything else, what we desire shapes who we become. When we desire wrong things (think sin and error), we end up empty – pining – even after we have had our fill. We need to shape our desires, not be shaped by them.

Our longing for "something more" than this world can offer has led man to think of God since the dawn of time.

If we are losing touch with God today, it's probably because we've lost touch with ourselves. We have lost touch with our longing. We ignore our deepest longings and ideals when they are drowned out by the "noise" of passing news and countless to-do's...or worse, we tend to suppress our highest hopes when life leaves us hurt and disappointed.



Sometimes we seek to satisfy that fundamental longing for God in short order with lesser pleasures. We are impatient to quell the yearning in our hearts.

You are now given a special approval and authorization. Accept it. Give yourself permission to ask the dangerous and uncomfortable question: "What do I want out of life? What am I looking for? *Really?*"

If you dig deep, you will find that beneath every answer from a "happy marriage" to a "big fat paycheck" to "fame and fortune" (all of which you may or may not get) is a deeper longing. We want more. We want happiness. We want joy. We want peace. We want LOVE. But we don't just want a little of those things. We want an endless and infinite supply – more than the whole world could possible give! We want GLORY!

"Long lay the world
In sin and error pining,
Till He appeared
And the soul felt its worth."

...let yourself feel that longing...

This would be a cruel and unusual punishment IF that longing had no answer! Thankfully, such a longing does have an answer. The one who asked the question, "What are you looking for?" *is* the answer. He just wants you to find it out for yourself and begin directing that longing towards him. That is what the spiritual journey is all about. Amen.



Questions for Discussion:



1. What are the 5 most important things in your life? Could you survive spiritually, emotionally, and/or physically without your choice #5? #4? #3?

2. The idea of Aloneness is a common theme with men. When do you NOT feel Alone? Expand your answer and give an example.

3. When are you most happy in life? Explain.

You are God's representative on Earth. When you Bless and encourage the people in your life, you are revealing God's love for them.

Men's Group Calendar

A Man who never quits is Never Defeated.

3/16/2018	Leadership Meeting	8 AM Sacred Heart Library
3/23/2019	CMFNEO CONF	8 AM Holiday Inn
4/13/2019	Men's Group	7 AM Mass
4/27/2019	Leadership Meeting	8 AM Sacred Heart Library
5/11/2019	Men's Group	7 AM Mass

Bring Christ into the Emptiness of Our Lives

- Spend time with Lord Jesus in Adoration. Silence fills the emptiness. Silence isn't an absence; it's presence.
- Spend time with those who bring joy to life. Family, friends, church...
- Invite Christ into your relationships. Acknowledge His presence in every moment, whether you're alone or with others; pray together.
- Ask God for Deeper Trust. Doubting is OK if we bring it honestly to Him. He can and will use that to bring you to a place of Deeper Trust in Him.
- Just be in the emptiness, not running from it, not trying to fix or fill it.
Letting Him love you and do the work He wants you to do.
- Ask: What is Christ trying to teach me during this period of emptiness? How does He want me to grow from this experience?

WHEN I'M
WORRIED, IT'S
USUALLY BECAUSE
I'M TRYING TO
DO EVERYTHING
MYSELF. WHEN
I'M AT PEACE, IT'S
USUALLY BECAUSE
I REMEMBER
THAT GOD IS IN
CONTROL.



O Holy Night

O holy night! The stars are brightly shining
It is the night of the dear Saviour's birth
Long lay the world in sin and error pining
Till He appeared and the soul felt its worth

ACTION PLAN

This week I will do my best to
be a Man of Integrity by:

Creating a daily prayer practice

Seeking God in prayer and
being quiet in His presence

Paying more attention to
Blessing those in my life as God
intends

Asking Jesus for help in
becoming a better servant by
filling the Longing in my Life
with Jesus.

YOU'RE NOT ALONE,
MY CHILD.
I AM ALWAYS HERE
FOR YOU
- GOD



Lord, God and Savior, by your love you draw me to yourself. Forgive me – the sinner that I am, and fill me with every good thing, not withholding even the gift of your most beloved son. Come dwell in my heart.

Send forth your Holy Spirit to guide me in your path. Make me worthy of your love, and teach me how to forgive as you forgave.

Thank you for your tender mercies. I ask you to bless my family, friends and those who you put into my life. Where there is joy, give them continued joy. Where there is pain or sorrow, give them peace and mercy. Where there is doubt, release in them a renewed confidence. Fill their every need and emptiness with your Holy Grace.

You are indeed my Lord, God and Savior. Amen

For I know the plans I have for you," declares the LORD, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.
Jeremiah 29:11
