

2.13.2016

TO COMFORT THE AFFLICTED

Being Attentive to the Needs of Others

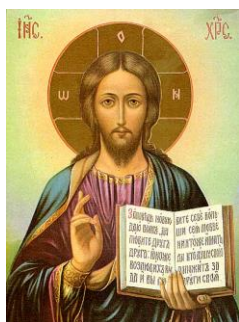
Jesus gave his undivided attention to the most “unworthy” of individuals during his 3 years on Earth. In today’s world, we might find this attention to be not only insignificant or unimportant but more so, quite challenging.

In the spirit of Pope Francis’ declaration of the Year of Mercy, we are discussing the Spiritual Work of Mercy: To Comfort the Afflicted.

Surely you know that you are God's temple, where the Spirit of God dwells. Anyone who destroys God's temple will himself be destroyed by God, because the temple of God is holy; and you are that temple. St. Paul

Today’s talk has a goal of enhancing our relationships. It is through these relationships that we do God’s work. We are planted in places, times and relationships to be a witness to Christ. Each of our various relationships and interactions with others in all walks of life: family, work, significant other, all you come into contact with; has a special message that is to be delivered. You are the Messenger. You have a unique Mission Statement.

What happens to our lives when we make a shift in our attitude and admit that Jesus is our Savior and invite Him into our heart of hearts? Let us listen attentively to the wisdom found in Holy Scripture, our Catechism and in Modern Comment.



Isaiah 40:1 – Clear-cut Direction From God

Comfort, give comfort to my people, says your God.

Luke 5:12-16 – Jesus Cures a Leper

Now there was a man full of leprosy in one of the towns where he was; and when he saw Jesus, he fell prostrate, pleaded with him, and said, “Lord, if you wish, you can make me clean.”

Jesus stretched out his hand, touched him, and said, “I do will it. Be made clean.” And the leprosy left him immediately.

Then he ordered him not to tell anyone, but “Go, show yourself to the priest and offer for your cleansing what Moses prescribed; that will be proof for them.” The report about him spread all the more, and great crowds assembled to listen to him and to be cured of their ailments, but he would withdraw to deserted places to pray.

2 Corinthians 1:3-4 – Straightforward Direction

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of compassion and God of all encouragement who encourages us in our every affliction, so that we may be able to encourage those who are in any affliction with the encouragement with which we ourselves are encouraged by God. The Word of the Lord.

Catechism

2447 - Works of Mercy

The works of mercy are charitable actions by which we come to the aid of our neighbor in his spiritual and bodily necessities. Instructing, advising, consoling, comforting are spiritual works of mercy, as are forgiving and bearing wrongs patiently.

The corporal works of mercy consist especially in feeding the hungry, sheltering the homeless, clothing the naked, visiting the sick and imprisoned, and burying the dead. Among all these, giving alms to the poor is one of the chief witnesses to fraternal charity; it is also a work of justice pleasing to God.



Modern Comment

TO COMFORT THE AFFLICTED: Being Attentive to the Needs of Others

In a recent meeting, I noted that most folks had their smart phones out on the conference table, ready to spring into action as an added appendage of the owner. We are drawn to them like the great tool they are. They not only connect us to people near & far, but can provide instant access to a world of information.

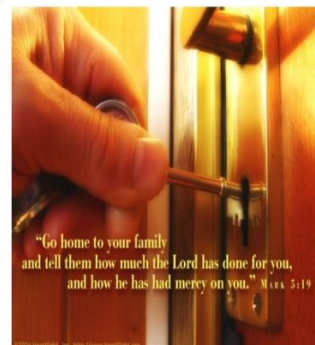
As I sat in the room, I realized my attentiveness was divided by smart phones, the content of the meeting and people present. If we are focused on the touchscreens, ringtones, etc.; are we actually distancing ourselves from one another? Distractions are nothing new. It is quite easy to lose attention with or without a smart phone, but our challenge is to focus on what really matters.

In modern life, we frequently view the ability to multitask as a positive skill or attribute. However, multitasking when one should be attentive to another person or persons, we may no longer be viewed as exercising a positive strength or attribute, but instead showing a weakness or a negative tendency. Whenever we take strength to an extreme, it becomes a weakness. For example, someone who might be described as “being reserved” becomes perceived as “unfriendly” when taken too far. Likewise, another person viewed as being “methodical” carried too far may be perceived as a “plodder”.

Jesus gave his undivided attention to the most “unworthy” of individuals during his 3 year ministry on Earth. In today’s world, we might find this attention to be not only insignificant or unimportant but more so, quite challenging. Jesus gave the leper his undivided attention when he encountered him. He entered this suffering man’s pain and cured him despite all other things going on around him.

Which are the Seven Spiritual Works of Mercy?

- To instruct the ignorant
- To counsel the doubtful
- To admonish sinners
- To bear wrongs patiently
- To forgive offences willingly
- To comfort the afflicted
- To pray for the living and the dead.



With life's distractions, do we miss what unfolds before our eyes? It takes a loving ear to be moved beyond distractions, to touch and comfort as Jesus calls us to do. There are people in our lives that may need, as well as deserve our undivided attention at times. When this occurs, are we present to them as Jesus was to the leper? Are we following Christ's example and call?

Questions to Focus on:

1. What part of this message most resonated with you?

2. Have you seen or personally been involved in a situation where a person was not as attentive as they should have been? What was the result??

3. In what ways can we become more attentive to others in our lives?

No one would remember the Good Samaritan if he only had good intentions.
Put your Faith into Actions.

May God Bless You.
St. Hilary Men's Group

Men's Group Calendar

2/27/2016	Leadership Meeting	8 AM Sacred Heart Library
3/12/2016	Men's Group	7 AM Mass
3/26/2016	Leadership Meeting	8 AM Sacred Heart Library
4/9/2016	CMFNEO ANNUAL CONFERENCE	Holiday Inn Rockside 8AM-4PM
4/23/2016	Leadership Meeting	8 AM Sacred Heart Library
5/14/2016	Men's Group	7 AM Mass
5/28/2016	Leadership Meeting	8 AM Sacred Heart Library



A Man who never quits is Never Defeated.

Dear Jesus, let me become a more forgiving person – toward others and my self—so that I may experience healing, peace, and renewal, and be a Blessing to others. Amen.



Saints are holy people and regular human persons who lived extraordinary lives. Saints responded to God's invitation to use their unique gifts. They are teachers and guides for us. God calls each one of us to lead a life of exceptional holiness.

“Paul tells you that every place is a place of prayer, though our Savior says: go into your “room” to pray. You must understand this is not a room enclosed by walls that imprison your body, but the room that is within you, the room where you hide your thoughts, where you keep your affections.

This room of prayer is always with you wherever you are, and it is always a secret room, where only God can see you.” Saint Ambrose

ACTION PLAN

This week I will do my best to listen for God's will in my life 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.
- Practice Forgiveness.



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 I meet in my comings and goings. Where there is joy, give them continued joy. Where there is pain or sorrow, give them your peace and mercy. Where there is self-doubt, release in them a renewed confidence. Fill their every need with your Holy Grace.

You are indeed my Lord, God and Savior. Amen

Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin.

Psalm 51:2

180 Degrees of Repentance
Face Towards Sin,
Your Back is to God.
Face Towards God,
Your Back is to Sin