THE MOST HOLY TRINITY



the Pastor's corner

Here is a "painful" reminder that can make some of you perhaps a bit uncomfortable, but as St. Paul recently reminded me: "Preach the word; be prepared in season and out of season; correct, rebuke and encourage—with great patience and careful instruction." (2 Tim 4:2). So maybe it is just is an invitation to get a spiritual tune-up before summer:

We live in a "you do you" world in which fewer and fewer people have the courage to stand up for anything they believe. And society has us thinking that this selfish mentality is a good thing. But we need to remember that our actions have serious consequences for us and for others. If we don't take our baptismal call seriously, this will lead not only to the devaluing of human life but to a culture of death. Our faith must be the most important thing in our lives. This means that, when others look at our actions, they should see us as Catholics behaving as Catholics and following the tenets of the faith. Jesus told us, "Your light must shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your heavenly Father." If our actions don't glorify God, who do they glorify? Ourselves? The devil? But there's a better God to worship than myself, or Satan. So when we partake in actions that cause others to believe erroneous teaching about the Catholic faith, we are committing the sin of scandal and possibly drawing people away from the faith by sowing the seeds of confusion or planting doubts. We see instances of this in all walks of life as some people idolize their own opinions at the expense of their Catholic faith. They choose to live as if Catholicism were a buffet where they can pick and choose what they want. They falsely call abortion "reproductive freedom," they advocate for the "right" of people to "change" their sex at will, and then they proceed to receive the Body and Blood of Christ as if nothing happened. This scandalous behavior sends a message to the world that it's okay to call yourself Catholic but to not actually follow the tenets of the faith. Let me give you a few examples:

- The Catholic businessman who cheats his clients teaches others that it's okay to use, abuse or misuse people. 1.
- A Catholic teacher living with her boyfriend sends the message to her students and others that cohabitation living 2. in sin - is acceptable to the Catholic Church.
- 3. The Catholic woman on birth control tells her friends that it's okay to close herself off from God's will when it comes to children.
- 4. The Catholic parent who fails to prioritize Sunday Mass teaches his family that God can be discarded when He's not convenient.
- 5. A Catholic who votes for pro-abortion and pro-euthanasia politicians sends the message that preborn and our lives don't have any value.

In light of this moral disaster, the Pope recently pointed out that those "weaknesses" so to speak, just keep piling up with no end in sight...and with no clear answer from him what to do in those cases. Personally, all this reminds me of 2 Tim 4:3-4 where St. Paul warns us, "For the time will come when people will not put up with sound doctrine. Instead, to suit their own desires, they will gather around them a great number of teachers to say what their itching ears want to hear. They will turn their ears away from the truth and turn aside to myths." People do not like to be confronted with their sin. Moreover, it is uncomfortable to be called to holiness, but if we are going to make true disciples, sometimes it will require us to speak hard truth. We must speak what people need to hear, not just what they want to hear. If you truly love your kids, you must sometimes correct and rebuke them. The same is true for our faith, for as G.K. Chesterton rightly noted what we need is not "a religion that is right where we are right" but "a religion that is right where we are wrong."

P.S. Just one more thing: I was once asked this critical question: Father, are you a pastor and prophet or just a pleaser? The answer was by no means automatic.



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