

Ordinary Time 6A - 2020

"I've got good news and bad news."

A cartoon in a national magazine shows Moses with two tablets under his arm coming down a mountain. "I've got good news and bad news," he says. "The good news is I got Him down to ten. The bad news is adultery is still in there." Danish theologian Søren Kierkegaard once said: "Most people believe that the Christian Commandments are intentionally a little too severe, like setting a clock half an hour ahead to make sure of not being late in the morning." Cable TV wizard, Ted Turner said that the Ten Commandments are out of date. I wonder which ones he would scrap. "Thou shalt not kill?" Absurd. Or "Thou shalt not steal?" Try stealing CNN's signal without paying for it. Probably he had in mind, "Thou shalt not commit adultery." Turner has been wrong before. The Ten Commandments will never be obsolete. Adultery is just as serious now as it was then. And neither God in the Old Testament nor Jesus in the New "intentionally [made His Commandments] a little too severe." Jesus knew that happiness comes from living according to God's laws. Breaking those laws, or sinning, brings unhappiness and even death. The life of integrity, or righteousness, is the life God intends for us to live. So according to the Sermon on the Mount, integrity is a big deal.

Anger destroyed his life:

Two great men were born in the year 1564 A.D. One man, Shakespeare, lived to the age of fifty-two and became the greatest dramatist of the English language. The other, Christopher Marlow, perished midway in his life at the age of twenty-nine, because of his anger. Christopher wrote some of the best tragical plays at a very young age. One of his best plays is *The Tragical History of the Life and Death of Dr. Faustus*. Had he lived longer he probably would have become greater than Shakespeare. He was a man given to anger. He picked up a quarrel with a man in a tavern. That man challenged him to a sword fight unto death. They both fought and Christopher was mortally wounded and later succumbed to his injuries. A great promise was terminated because of anger. (*John Rose in John's Sunday Homilies*).

Passion and Reason:

The Greek philosopher, Plato, four hundred years before Christ, wrote of two horses in the human heart, Passion and Reason. Passion is the wild untamed horse with boundless strength and energy, but very hard to control

and direct. Reason is the tamed horse, accustomed to the reins, disciplined in stride and responding to directions. A chariot hitched to a pair of Passions might go anywhere but would surely crash or overturn before long. However, a charioteer who selects a pair of Reasons will be too cautious and fearful to go anywhere worthwhile. But if Passion and Reason can be paired, then the powerful energy is harnessed, and the journey of life can be enjoyed. - The teaching of Jesus strongly affirms the need of rules, but rules are to be understood as a means to the end, which is a life of spiritual strength and commitment. (*Sylvester O'Flynn in The Good News of Mathew's Year*).

Peter Pan:

There is a delightful scene in James Matthew Barrie's famous play, *Peter Pan*. Peter is in the children's bedroom. They're all jumping up and down with excitement. Peter has just flown across the room, and now the children want to fly too. They try to fly from the floor, then try to fly from the bed, but they can't do it. "How did you do it?" John asks Peter. Peter answers, "It's easy, John. Just think wonderful, beautiful thoughts. They will lift you off the ground and send you soaring into the air." -It's the same way with the Christian life. The way to live a Christian life is to "think wonderful, beautiful thoughts." They will lift you off the ground and send you soaring to Heaven. (*Mark Link in Sunday Homilies*).