

FAITH AND REASON

Reverence: Thomas Aquinas put before us the paths to God: truth, love, goodness, beauty, being it is because we are created in God's image and likeness that these five paths through life and to God are not simply convenient options. On the contrary, they are the paths to sanity and sanctity in this world. To put it simply, how can one consider even the possibility of sanctity if a person is not sane? And the presence of Sanity makes it possible to understand sanctity and what one must do to achieve It. Thus, St Thomas reminds us "Grace builds on nature", "Reason is the handmaiden of faith, not its domineering partner". On

the day of our Baptism, that day when God shared his life with us. That life, of its very nature, cherishes "being" and will always seek and embrace truth, love, goodness. beauty. And why? Because the life of the Trinity which we now share cannot exist, cannot survive without them. We must therefore avoid anyone, anything, that will lead us off these paths to God. "Seek good and avoid evil" is the basic precept on the Natural Law. The natural law is that law governing our nature which enables us to survive as human beings or makes survival worthwhile.

Goodness and evil are not always obvious..... they don many disguises. Beware of slogans. they can be dangerous, and frequently are. Slogans are often half-truths that should bother us, and why? Because a lie is obviously a lie and identified as such. Slogans are frequently half-truths, but they are so appealing they are accepted as the truth. Slogans are opiates for the mind and the conscience, preventing us from thinking clearly, critically, and well. "Familiarity breeds contempt" we are told with that air of certainty! It does nothing of the kind. Familiarity can breed insensitivity, overlooking taking things for granted.... including people. Insensitivity one can change - honest reflection, honesty with self and the efforts that must follow. But "contempt"... who can bear It?

There is a story of an artist who was drafted into the army during World War II. He and another soldier were on sentry duty at a railroad in a very picturesque area, The artist frequently Interrupted his watch to look at the landscape, which did not go unnoticed by his companion. Finally, the other man asked the artist why he stopped so often to look across the field, "I am looking at the landscape" he replied, And his friend said, "what do you see when you look at the landscape", The artist paused and said, "I see the next most beautiful thing to the human face". That is strange the other man said, "I see animals, trees, hills, fields" and nothing else". People see, but do they know how to see". Do they go beyond the externals? Do they pause to consider the miracle of growth in Its many forms? All the forms of beauty? The way nature conceals her secrets until we discover them. The Sun, which gives light and life, without which this would be a dead planet. All the wonders of nature like a great "sacrament" of God. Like art, they speak of the Artist. Little wonder that Albert Einstein should refer to nature as "the fact of God", and mathematics as "The language of God".

Those who consider life (being) in some vague general sense, without over realizing that life loses its meaning and direction, it wanders aimlessly in a world that has already lost its way, unless It retrieves what it should never have town away seeking the four paths which life (being) must have if it is to retain Its value, Importance, integrity. Life, in other words, becomes blind and is unable to see the value, importance, significance of other things. And this is precisely what has brought the modern world to its knees. It has an identity crisis, clearly evident in the suffocating immorality, depravity, vulgarity, as if such behavior could ever be the meaning of life. The following prayer by Cardinal Cushing will, one hopes to help many people to be at home in our world, indeed in our universe. Ease the pounding of my heart by the quieting of my mind. Steady my hurried pace with the eternal reach of time. Give me, amid the confusion of the day, the calmness of the everlasting hills. Break the tension of my nerves and muscles with the soothing music of the singing streams that live in my memory. Help me to know the magic restoring power of sleep. Teach me the art of taking a minute vacation - of slowing down to look at a flower, to chat with a friend, to pat a dog, to read a few lines from a good book. Remind me each day of the fable of the hare and the tortoise, that I may know that the race is not always to the swift and that there is more to life than increasing its speed. Let me look upward into the branches of the towering oak and know that it grew and strong because it grew slowly and well. Slow me down Lord and inspire me to send my roots deep into the soil of earth's enduring values, that I may look towards the stars of my greater destiny... **Fr. William C. Mooney**

A Prayer of Bishop Sheen: "O Lord, the mind's desire for knowledge and truth can be perverted by a person, Jesus help us. Too many people make up for themselves what truth is. And they are wrong. Hel p us, Jesus, not to be so foolish, you are our guide. Keep us from pride, advice, greed, selfishness, and the refusal to help the poor. It has been said that it is wrong to repress our impulses. But repression is not always wrong. In fact, to give food to the hungry is a repression of our selfishness. Help us Jesus to understand. Remorse is God calling the soul back to Him. Guilt is good. Asking forgiveness is even better. Virtue comes from repeated ·good - acts. They form good habits. Help me, Lord, to form good habits. The athlete by constant practice in doing it right comes to develop the right instincts in the game. Help me Jesus to do good deeds to make good habits so I can serve you better.

The Teacher Within: There is a great mystery, my friends, in my attempts to teach you. The sound of my words may strike your ears but the real teacher is inside you. You really do not learn anything from another human being. Oh, I can suggest some truths from the sound of my voice, but if the Divine Teacher is not in you, the sounds I make are empty. It is the Divine Master within who teaches you. It is Christ who teaches you and if you do not hear his words sounding within, any words blaring from outside are useless clatter.
St Augustine

Read the Scriptures with the Saints: It certainly appears to me that no one understands the sense of all scriptural texts so fully that he does not still find hidden there many mysteries that are yet to be understood. For example, consider such passages as those about the Antichrist or the last judgment by Christ. These things still remain hidden. Nevertheless, these days there are showing up, first in one place and then in another, much like swarms of bees or hornets, those who boast that they are "self-taught" with regard to understanding Scripture. Without even referring to commentaries of the holy teachers of old, they claim that when they read all that the ancient fathers confessed, they found difficult these "self-taught" men discover it to be clear, open and easy. Yet the Fathers were men of no less talent, training, or tireless zeal than these moderns. And as for that "spirit" to which these moderns give such lip service rarely have in their hearts in this regard the Fathers who surpassed them just as they did in holiness of life. But now these modern men who have sprouted up overnight as "theologians" claiming to know everything, not only dispute the interpretation of sacred scripture offered by all men who led such heavenly lives. They even fail to agree among themselves about the great dogmas of the Christian faith. Rather, each of them, whoever he may be claiming that he has the truth, vanquishes the rest in debate - only to be vanquished by the rest in turn. Even so they are all alike in this way. They all oppose the Catholic faith, and they are all conquered by it... **St Thomas More.**

A Thought For the Day

Sunday	The soul of the Catholic faith is reverence.
Monday	The Holy Eucharist is divine food for the soul.
Tuesday	The essence of true holiness consists in conformity to the will of God.
Wednesday	The wish to pray is a prayer in itself.
Thursday	We make Idols of our concepts, but Wisdom is born of wonder.
Friday	I have the strength for everything through him who empowers me.
Saturday	We can never attain a maximum love of God with only a minimum knowledge of God.

The First Fruits of the Church: At Sunday Mass, Christians relive with particular intensity the experience of the Apostles on the first evening of Easter when the Risen Lord appeared to them as they were gathered together. In a sense, the People of God of all times were present in that small nucleus of disciples, the first fruits of the Church. Through their testimony, every generation of believers hears the greeting of Christ, rich with the messianic gift of grace, won by his blood and offered with his Spirit "Peace be with you" .

The Lesson: The Lord said, "Say We" But I shook my head, hid my hands behind my back and said " I " The Lord said, "Say We" But I looked upon the grimy and all awry. Myself in all those twisted shapes? Ah no. Distastefully I turned my head away, persisting "They". The Lord said, "Say We" and I at last, richer by a hoard of years and tears, looked in their eyes and formed the heavy word that bent my neck and lowed my head: Then like a shamed schoolboy then I mumbled low. "We, Lord "...**Karle Wilson Baker**

Be Faithful to Your Baptism: I am all the more eager to see you, now that I hear that you have been adorned with Baptism, that great ornament, the clothing of immortality, that cloak s our mortality, and puts out of sight the death of the flesh. Through it, whatever is perishable is swallowed up by what is imperishable. In this way, God in his goodness has now separated you from sin, united you to himself, opened the doors of heaven, and pointed out the paths that lead to heavenly happiness. I beg you then, by that wisdom in which you excel all others, to receive the divine prudently. Prove to be a faithful guardian of this treasure, the repository of the royal gift, keeping watch over it with all carefulness. Preserve the seal of righteousness unbroken, so that you will stand before God, shining in the brightness of the Saints. Let no spot or wrinkle defile the pure robe of immortality. Instead, holiness in all your members since you have put on Christ. For it is said in Scripture: that all those who have been baptized in Christ have put on Christ cf. Gal 3:27. For this reason, let every part of you be holy, as is fitting for one who is clothed in such vestment of holiness and light **St Basil**

In His Will is Our Peace
Fr. William C. Mooney

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