

NOVEMBER 2020

Food for thought...



A sick man turned to his doctor as he was preparing to leave the examination room and said, "Doctor, I am afraid to die. Tell me what lies on the other side." Very quietly, the doctor said, "I don't know..."

"You don't know? You're a Christian man, and don't know what's on the other side?"

The doctor was holding the handle of the door; on the other side came a sound of scratching and whining, and as he opened the door, a dog sprang into the room and leaped on him with an eager show of gladness.

Turning to the patient, the doctor said,

"Did you notice my dog? He's never been in this room before. He didn't know what was inside. He knew nothing except that his master was here, and when the door opened, he sprang in without fear.

I know little of what is on the other side of death, but I do know one thing... I know my Master is there, the one who gives meaning to my life, the one I try to follow, and that is enough."

The solemnity of All Saints reminds us that every one of us – without exception – is called to be a saint. Not one of us is called to be anything less than a saint. Yet, to be saints together.

Now, the question is: What is the best way to become a saint in the 21st century? **Is it** to do what St. Anthony did in the 4th century: turn our backs to the pleasures of this world and live apart from society?

Is it to do what St. Francis of Assisi did in the thirteenth century: turn our backs on material wealth and preach the Gospel wherever we can find a crowd? **Is it** to do something like St. Francis Xavier, our Patron Saint, did in the sixteenth century: leave your own country, go to the missions overseas, and bring the Gospel of the Lord Jesus to those who didn't know him?

Or is it to do something like St. Elizabeth Seton did in the nineteenth century: raise a family and spend the rest of our lives working with society's sick and needy?

The answer to these questions is 'No.' You don't become a saint by doing what God made somebody else to do.

You become a saint by doing what God called you to do.

The Beatitudes (Mt 5:1-12) spell out in simple terms the guidelines that we should use to live our lives. **To see** with the eyes of Jesus... **To show deep gratitude** to God and to everyone... **To live and to love** with the heart of Jesus, to go beyond ourselves and think of others, **to reach out** to others, beginning with those we rub elbows with, and in a special way our sisters and brothers most in need... so to give our contribution ***"to make of humanity one family" (St. Guido M. Conforti).***

To make God's will your own and not the other way around...

Some young Christians were attending an international summer camp. One project the leaders assigned them was to think up more effective ways to spread God's word in the world. The most provocative suggestion came from an African girl, who said:

"When Christians in my country think a pagan village is ready for Christianity, they don't send books or missionaries. They send a good Christian family.

The example of the family converts the village." Why would/wouldn't your family qualify for such a mission?

"Not the cry, but the flight of the wild duck leads the flock to fly and follow" (Chinese Proverb).
