

BULLETIN -- AUGUST 16, 2015

Well, here's another nice prayer you've gotten us into! It appeared in the current (July/August 2015) issue of *Maryknoll* magazine, this by Fr. Joseph R. Veneroso, M.M., the former superior general. Father Veneroso has gained a reputation as a writer and poet, and you can see why from his prayer titled "Healing Wounds":

Lord, I offer you my wounds
As you offered me yours
As a source of healing and hope
For all who suffer and are still in pain.

I offer you my scars, reminders of battles
Lost or won, to encourage all who still
Find themselves in conflict and war
That they might soon find peace within.

I offer you my memories, faded over time or not
Even those I have struggled mightily to forget
That these might be a beacon of light
To all who still mourn, haunted by the past.

I offer you my shattered dreams
Remnants and ruins of once ambitious plans
That these too might become fertile ground
For all who, like trees, dare to reach heavenward.

I offer you, Lord, my entire self,
As you offered me yours
Wounded, scarred, faded, shattered
That all might rise healed, renewed, blessed and whole.

Be not afraid. Some of you have had the privilege of making a **Cursillo** weekend. Perhaps many others have been asked or invited, but politely declined. Here's some history of the origins of Cursillo, courtesy of the *Maryknoll* magazine for May/June 2015, p. 28: Eduardo Bonnin grew up in a devout Catholic family on the island of Mallorca, Spain. He was just 26 years old when he founded the Cursillo Movement in 1944. Having seen his country ravaged by the Spanish Civil War, he was "concerned that the message of Christ was being presented in a soulless form." While serving as a soldier in the army of Spain's General Francisco Franco, who ruled the country from 1939 to 1975, Bonnin came across a speech by Pope Pius XII that asked the faithful to "seek new ways to let everyone know the love of God." Bonnin began to look inward, asking the Holy Spirit to guide him in finding ways to re-ignite the true flame of Christian love. Four years later, he began what would become known as the Cursillo ("a little course") in Christianity movement.

The movement spread first from Spain to Colombia and then to Texas. Today, it's estimated that there are between 30 and 40 million *cursillistas* (people who have "made the weekend") worldwide of various Christian faiths. The Holy See (aka "The Vatican") recognizes Cursillo as an ecclesial or legitimate Church movement, which has been adapted for youths, young adults, prison communities, and for those with physical disabilities.

Words from the wise. Harvard Business School professor Clayton M. Christensen (1952-) has come out with a brief video clip which is receiving wide circulation on the Internet. We are happy to reprint its content here. He says:

Some time ago, I had a conversation with a Marxist economist from China. He was coming to the end of a Fulbright fellowship here in Boston, and I asked him if he had learned anything that was surprising or unexpected. And without any hesitation, he said, "Yeah, I had no idea how critical religion is to the functioning of democracy. The reason why democracy works," he said, "is not because the government was designed to oversee what everybody does; but rather democracy works because most people, most of the time, voluntarily choose to obey the law. And in your past most Americans attended a church or a synagogue every week, and they were taught there by people whom they respected." My friend went on to say that Americans followed these rules because they had come to believe that they weren't just accountable to society, they were accountable to God. My Chinese friend heightened a vague but nagging concern I've harbored inside that, as religion loses its influence over the lives of Americans, what will happen to our democracy? Where are the institutions that are going to teach the next generation of Americans that they need to voluntarily choose to obey the laws? Because if you take away religion, you can't hire enough police.

The professor's profound insights, along with those of his friend from China, prompt a few pastoral considerations. Democracy--and a representative republic, which is more exactly our form of government--depends on a common vision. That does not mean that we all must agree on everything, or that there can be no differences of opinion. It does mean that we recognize that, in order to live together as a community, there must be enough that we have in common that we can make use of those commonalities to live our own individual lives in peace. Can you imagine how difficult it would be to travel around the U.S. if each state had its own language and currency, with each one completely unintelligible or unacceptable anywhere else? Then, can you imagine how difficult it would be to live in our city or community if each *business* had its own currency or tokens, which could not be used to trade anywhere else? Why would we do such a stupid thing? you might ask. And yet anyone who insists that teachers have no right to impart a presumably rigid, lopsided, authoritarian view of historical events, and that there are no common factors to consider in social studies education, is really asking for increasing levels of division. Such division ultimately results in anarchy (=lawlessness), and can be resolved only by dictatorship, when someone strong-arms his or her way to power and bullies everyone else into submission. More on this next week. God bless you!

Fr. Den

Thought for the week: Automobile air conditioning was first introduced by the Packard automobile company in 1939. So much for the old wives' tale about the Goldberg brothers, Max, Hi, Norm, and Lo (check the AC settings!) selling Henry Ford on the idea in 1946. Sometimes the fantastic outlives the facts.