



Eighth Sunday in Ordinary Time C
March 3, 2019

- ◆ **“Death, where is thy sting?”**
- ◆ **Resources for parents and adults who want to protect the children and fight porn themselves**

In today’s second reading, Paul, speaking to us about death, asks:

*Where, O death, is your victory?
Where, O death, is your sting?*

Fr. Flor McCarthy offers the following reflection on Paul’s question: “Death, where is your sting?”

It’s not that long ago since diabetes was a killer disease for which there was no remedy. But then insulin was discovered, and suddenly sufferers were given back hope. Insulin doesn’t stop people from getting diabetes, nor does it rid them of the distress it causes. But it does take the sting out of the disease for sufferers because they know it is not fatal. That makes a huge difference. It enables them to live with it.

St. Paul says that victory Christ gained over death has taken the sting out of death for us (Second Reading). How? Because we know death doesn’t have the final say. But this doesn’t mean all the pain, sadness and anguish have been taken out of it.

*In her marvelous book, **Wouldn’t Take Nothing For My Journey Now**, Maya Angelou says:*

“I can accept the idea of my own demise, but I am unable to accept the death of anyone else. I find it impossible to let a friend or relative go into that country of no return. Disbelief becomes my close companion, and anger follows in its wake. I answer the heroic question, ‘Death, where is thy sting?’ with ‘It is here in my heart and mind and memories.’

Death is an enormous reality. Today there is a tendency to deny it or at least to cover it up. Undertakers do their utmost to pretty it up. Preachers often use

soothing phrases and euphemisms when talking about it. The next-of-kin are sometimes given drugs to cope with it. All of this is counterproductive. People must be helped to confront death and to become reconciled with it. Those who do so will find their lives enriched.

What best helps us to confront death is, of course, our Christian faith. Faith enables us to face death with courage and hope, because we know we can conquer it in Christ. We still have to face the pain and anguish of death. But because of Christ’s victory over it, the sting has been taken out of it. Or rather, the sting is still there but it’s no longer fatal.

However, just because we believe in the resurrection doesn’t mean we know all the answers about what happens to us after death. But we don’t need to know all the answers. It is enough that we trust in God. In a world where many desperately seek to know all the answers, it is not easy to admit this.

Each night we make a big act of faith. We abandon ourselves, body and soul, into the arms of sleep. We let go of everything, and for all practical purposes become like dead people, in the hope of rising again in the following morning. Most people like to say some prayer before abandoning themselves to sleep. Here is an excellent prayer for the end of the day.

*Grant, O Lord, that each day before
we enter the little death of sleep,
we may undergo the little judgement of the past day,
so that every wrong deed may be forgiven
and every unholy thought set right.
Let nothing go down into the depths of our being
which has not been forgiven and sanctified.
Then we shall be ready
for our final birth into eternity,
and look forward with love and hope
to standing before you,
who art both Judge and Saviour,
holy Judge and loving Saviour.*

- Bishop Appleton

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Death is not something most of us like to dwell on. Many see it as a morbid subject to think about. Such people would most likely have a very difficult time coming to terms with their own death. If our tendency is to live life denying death, we will probably deny our own dying and the dying of loved ones around us.

When life is good and we have reasons to get up in the morning, we have no desire to die. But if we are in a lot of pain for a long time, we may welcome death. As Fr. Flor McCarthy said above, we prepare for death spiritually by having a close relationship with Christ. *Emotionally*, we prepare for death by being willing to talk about it. We also prepare emotionally by facing the best we can the “little deaths” or losses that we experience along the journey of life.

We also prepare for death by making a *Will*. It is amazing how many people have not made a *Will*. Not having a *Will* will, most likely, create unnecessary legal, financial and emotional stress for survivors. (In making a *Will*, consider remembering your parish or our School Endowment Fund.)

The following is a statement by Cardinal John Henry Newman, famous convert to Catholicism in the 19th Century. Many of you have read this before but I assume some of you have not. It is followed by a beautiful but very challenging prayer by Brother Charles de Foucauld, founder of the Little Brothers of Jesus Religious Order.

*God has created me to do Him some definite service;
He has committed some work to me which
He has not committed to another.
I have a mission—I may never know it in this life,
but I shall be told it in the next.
I am a link in a chain, a bond of connection
between persons.
He has not created me for naught.
I shall do good, I shall do His work.
I shall be an angel of peace, a preacher of truth
in my own place while not intending it if I do
but keep His commandments.
Therefore, I will trust Him.
Whatever I am, I can never be thrown away.
If I am in sickness, my sickness may serve Him;
in perplexity, my perplexity may serve Him.*

*If I am in sorrow, my sorrow may serve Him.
He does nothing in vain.
He knows what He is about.
He may take away my friends.
He may throw me among strangers.
He may make me feel desolate, make my spirits sink,
hide my future from me—
still He knows what He is about.*

PRAYER OF ABANDONMENT

*Father,
I abandon myself into your hands;
do with me what you will.
Whatever you may do, I thank you:
I am ready for all, I accept all.
Let only your will be done in me,
and in all your creatures
I wish no more than this, O Lord.
Into your hands I commend my soul
I offer it to you with all the love of my heart,
for I love you, Lord, and so need to give myself,
to surrender myself into your hands without reserve,
and with boundless confidence,
for you are my Father.*

- Bro. Charles de Foucauld

Some resources for parents and adults dealing with porn

Porn, as we all know, is a huge industry for men, more and more for women, and now even for children at a young age—which is so shocking. It is something all priests hear all the time in the confessional—nearly always with men.

Resources for working with children

Good Pictures Bad Pictures: Porn-Proofing Today's Young Kids.

One parent writes:

“Within minutes of beginning this book, we were discussing pornography with the same ease with which we have talked to our kids about drugs, alcohol or ‘stranger dangers.’ By the end of the book, our ten-year-old son was discussing our family’s specific action plan to protect us from the dangers of pornography exposure.”

Nicole Liebert, MSW

“Whether we like it or not, we need to talk to our kids in an age-appropriate way about the dangers

of pornography. Good Pictures Bad Pictures is quite simply the best book available to help facilitate this conversation. Get it. Read it. Tell everyone you know about it.”

Matt Fradd, Author, Speaker, Anti-porn Activist

Plunging Pornography—A Catholic Bathroom Book by DJ Hueneman, appropriate for ages 13+. The back cover of the book states:

Americans spend more than two weeks in the restroom every year. Let’s put this toilet time to use! *Plunging Pornography* is the perfect resource for teens and adults living in our porn-saturated culture. This engaging bathroom book tackles the tough topic of pornography from an authentically Catholic perspective. It outlines both the religious and scientific reasons for WHY & HOW to escape pornography.

Parents, teens, and young adults will benefit from this easy-to-read resource. Place this book on the toilet of those with whom you wish to lovingly share the truth about porn.

The restroom can be an unsanitary sanctuary. It’s time for the porcelain throne to point to the Heavenly Throne. Every Catholic bathroom should have this book!

How parents can use this book:

Step 1: Parents read the book.

Step 2: Parents place the book in teen’s bathroom.

Step 3: Parents begin dialogue with teen using the included conversation starters.

The Porn Myth by Matt Fradd, a highly sought after speaker in the area of pornography. He is the co-creator of the Victory app which provides a strategic battle plan for winning the struggle against pornography.

Three Website helps for people struggling with pornography

- Integrityrestored.com
- Convenanteyes.com
- Fightthenewdrug.org

The newly ordained young priest who gave me these three websites said that, in his opinion, the third one is the best.

Have a blessed week,

