

TRINITY NEWS

Pentecost XII Coping With an Irrational and Broken World NOW

How do we remain rational in an irrational world? What do we tell our children about our vision for their future? What are we to do about the rage we feel zooming to the surface of our minds and screaming through our emotions when we see children being slaughtered in the name of God, daughters killed because they fall in love with the wrong man, that is from another religion, or no religion at all? Why do Christian fundamentalists condemn people to eternal death, for that is what hell implies, for not saying the right words about God? There is a hell of course, one created by humans, and the unflawed gaze of God must look upon it with some horror. The non-believer says, "Why would such a loving God so-called allow us to create such hells on earth?"

At the personal level, how do I handle irrational people? When people are mouthing words to us or about us that make no sense, and yet we feel the stirrings of reaction slide apace to the surface, what do we say or not say?

My own experience tells me that we need a strategy that this preset in our near-surface consciousness about how we will handle such matters. The onslaught, usually sudden, leaves us with little time to gather our wits.

"Sell your possessions, and give alms. Make purses for yourselves that do not wear out, an unfailing treasure in heaven, where no thief comes near and no moth destroys. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also" (Luke 12: 33-34). What we have in earthly possessions or standing is not the remedy for dealing with the mental, emotional and physical damage that is a consequence of imposed rage. How it is imposed varies, and so do its consequences. But nothing can ultimately erode the beauty of a heart set on God and no thief can take it from us. The punchline is, "Where your treasure is, there will your heart be also." The "treasure" is the "pearl of great price" that no one can buy. It is the only thing worth selling everything for in this world.

A Strategy for your Personal Revision and Application

- 1. Don't mirror irrationality.**
- 2. Don't react to the manipulative acts/words of another.**
- 3. Respond if you need to at your own pace, not theirs.**
- 4. Don't give away the inspiration and strength and loving mercy of your spiritual heart, because you need it most when you are attacked in some way.**
- 5. Only stew about it for a week at most, and then have a good laugh about it, even if it hurts, like after an operation.**
- 6. Love wins! Not a sloppy excuse for love, but love that counts the cost and still loves, looking for the best in the other human, despite their open malevolence and apparent stupidity.**
- 7. Look into your heart where Christ is, holding a Cross, and help him to bear the load. If you can't forgive these people, ask him to do it for you. You may be wearing a crown of thorns now, but like our Master, you will rise above it. "Vengeance is mine" says the Lord, "And I will repay." No one ultimately escapes murderous intent and the defiling of our humanity. We are the crown of creation. Let us behave like it!**

Bishop Arthur Jones

THIS WEEK:

Monday.

- Vestry Meeting, 6:00pm, Parish office

Wednesday.

- Bible Study, 10:00am
- Group discussion, 7:30pm, Parish office

Thursday.

- Midweek Eucharist, 10:00am, Chapel
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NEXT WEEK'S READINGS:

Jeremiah 23:23-29;

Psalm 82

Hebrews 12:1-7,11-14;

Luke 12:49-56