

Reflection Saturday week 9 2020

My mum always said that *“The Path to Hell is paved with good intentions!!”* Yet we also know that the intentions behind every act, however good, is key, as Jesus shows us in the story of the widow’s mite. We often misunderstand, misrepresent and respond to people negatively because we have misunderstood their intentions. Those with sensitive consciences often question if any good act they do is truly altruistic. There are also long-term intentions: eating more healthily, living more simply, taking more exercise, giving up smoking etc. One of our prayer intentions is gratitude. We can live our lives in gratitude whatever befalls us, even a pandemic! Listen to this conversation:

After a while, Piglet asked Pooh, “When you wake up in the morning, Pooh, what is the first thing you say to yourself?” “What’s for breakfast?” said Pooh.

“I say, I wonder what’s going to happen exciting today?” said Piglet. . . .

Who do you think will have a more exciting day?

Sr Macrina Wiederkehr OSB started her day with the following prayer:

Your roots have found me. I am bursting with life
I feel like a brand-new bud singing gratefully to you...
... I will preach the gospel of silence joyfully
as I burst forth hopefully into the sacred space of this new day
knowing full well that this is only a pale glimmer of the Life I am becoming
So Full of Life Am I!

Her intention was to live each day and every day in gratitude to God so that it became a way of being. Intention, therefore, not only influences our actions but shapes our whole being and our whole outlook on life. Problems and difficulties become challenges and opportunities. Failures become means of changing life for the better, a means of growing in wisdom, a way of understanding the importance of forgiveness for healing. Failures breed compassion, patience and tolerance towards others, especially those who fail. They make us less judgemental, even non-judgemental, and more grateful to God.

John Henry Newman reminds us that God also has an intention for us:

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 my 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.

Final Thought about an intention making a difference

I told my boss three companies were after me and I needed a raise to stay at my job. We haggled for a few minutes and he gave me a 5 % pay rise.

As I was leaving his office, he asked me, “By the way, which companies are after you?”

I responded, "The gas, electric and telephone company."