

Reflection Monday Week 2 – 2024

There has always been conflict between the old ways and the new ways. All that is old is not necessarily better or right in a later age, while all that is new is not necessarily better than the old.

One commentator suggests that *the traditional ways, identified with the Pharisees and with John the Baptist, were basically those where loyalty to God was expressed through strict observation of laws and external practices of commitment, like fasting. The Way of Jesus is quite different. It is primarily interior, rather than just exterior. It is ultimately rooted in relationships based on love, a love that always seeks the well-being of the other. If we judge what Jesus does by the old ways, we will encounter difficulties. As Paul says we need 'to have the mind of Christ.'* (1 Cor 2:16).

As always, however, this is much more difficult than suggested. How do we develop the mind of Christ within us? After all Jesus stated clearly that he had not come to abolish the Law but to fulfil it? Some Laws are very good for certain situations and certain people but not in other situations or for other people. So, Jesus asks us to base our decisions on love - a love that always seeks the well-being and benefit of others.

The more we reflect on the decisions Jesus makes in the gospels, the more we will develop a mind like his. When we draw the wrong conclusion and fail to help and care for others, let us admit that we are wrong and ask God to help us do better the next time. Jesus is better able and more willing to help us after we admit our mistakes and looks on us with even greater love.