

TRINITY NEWS

Pentecost 12 Law and Forgiveness - Matthew 18:15-35

Norman Mailer, the quirky and very gifted American writer used to quote this saying: “One must grow or forever pay the price of remaining the same”. One of the weakest sayings in the English language is “That’s how I am.” This is used to preclude any change of mind in a number of situations. It also precludes growth in a person. Tony Buzan developed a technique for clustering materials called Mind Mapping. This technique works because it is based on the fact that we are mind mapping all the time in terms of our own self apprehension. We merely have to transfer it onto paper to form a framework for recalling other materials. Our interior mind maps in their more rigid forms influence unbending behaviour.

While I was in Australia I have received a huge gift. I had prayed for it for years. When my youngest sister Esme was born, my youngest sister aged 16 called Joyce went off my parent’s radar and they focused only on the new arrival. This brought predictable results and until recently they had not talked for years. This was not the wish of the youngest sister. When Joyce recently found that her son John had an aneurysm of the brain and required surgery in Prince Alfred Hospital in Sydney she called me to pray for her son. She then took the brave step of telephoning her youngest sister Esme to share her anxiety. It has brought reconciliation, and I pray that it is sustained. Joyce said, “I am stubborn, and it wasn’t easy to call.” I said to her, “Stubbornness doesn’t matter when the years slide away and little time is left to reconcile.” As Christ advises, it is better to reconcile on the way rather than to leave it until the penalties are too great.

Peter is told by Christ in this passage that forgiveness extends to seventy times seven. This is a round figure, just as Jesus’ 40 days in the wilderness is a round figure and the 144,000 of those elect who are the privileged ones at the End in the book of Revelation is a round figure. Here it indicates the unlimited scope of forgiveness if we have the courage to extend it and receive it.

The parable of the unforgiving servant is about the servant who is forgiven a huge debt by his master rather than being thrown into prison for it. The same servant then goes out and ill-treats another servant who owes him a debt, throwing him into prison. When this parable is read and expounded in any congregation it immediately stirs memories of family of origin. Most of the problems that we have in life stem from our family of origin. If you don’t think that, do a little memory backtracking!

My daughter Sandra sent this to me recently. You may have read it, but it may still carry some resonances for you. As a teenager Sandra would not have approved, she now has two children in their twenties who have found growing up very difficult!

Charles J. Sykes talks about how feel-good, politically correct teachings created a generation of kids with no concept of reality and how this concept set them up for failure in the real world.

Rule 1: Life is not fair - get used to it!

Rule 2: The world doesn't care about your self-esteem.

The world will expect you to accomplish something BEFORE you feel good about yourself.

Rule 3: You will NOT make \$60,000 a year right out of high school.

You won't be a vice-president with a car phone until you earn both.

Rule 4: If you think your teacher is tough, wait till you get a boss

Rule 5: Flipping burgers is not beneath your dignity.

Your Grandparents had a different word for burger flipping: They called it opportunity.

Rule 6: If you mess up, it's not your parents' fault,

So don't whine about your mistakes, learn from them.

Rule 7: Before you were born, your parents weren't as boring as they are now.

They got that way from paying your bills, cleaning your clothes and listening to you talk about how cool you thought you were. So before you save the rain forest from the parasites of your parent's generation, try delousing the closet in your own room. Keep yourself clean.

Rule 8: Your school may have done away with winners and losers, but life HAS NOT.

In some schools, they have abolished failing grades and they'll give you as MANY TIMES as you want to get the right answer.

***This doesn't bear the slightest resemblance to ANYTHING in real life.**

Rule 9: Life is not divided into semesters.

You don't get summers off and very few employers are interested in helping you FIND YOURSELF.

***Do that on your own time.**

Rule 10: Television is NOT real life.

In real life people actually have to leave the coffee shop and go to jobs.

Rule 11: Be nice to nerds.

Chances are you'll end up working for one...

TO PLAN:

TODAY, 9:15am.

- Start of Sunday School

Sept 6, Tuesday.

- Bible Study, 10am
- Bible Study at the Tutton's
(#3 Sta. Potenciana St.,
Urdaneta Village, Makati),
7:15pm

Sept, 8, Thursday.

- Midweek Eucharist, 10am,
Chapel.

NEXT SUNDAY'S READINGS:

Ecclesiasticus 27:30-28:7

Psalm 103

Romans 14:5-12

Matthew 18:21-25