

## Do what you say!

A few days ago, I sat among a group of recovering addicts listening to one of them talking about faith. These people have found their way out of the terrible compulsions of addiction by handing over their life and their will to the care of God and they share their experience to help others, who are trying to walk the same path. The man, I was listening to, was talking about his attempts to live this life of faith – and letting himself be guided by God, day by day, which is what such a commitment implies. He told about the time, when he and his wife were trying to have a child – his wife wanted one desperately, but he himself was not so sure because he had already, as he said, walked out on two children, due to his addiction, and he was not sure whether he deserved another chance. However, because his wife wanted a child so badly, he went along with it and, on his knees, handed the problem over to the Lord's guidance. A little time after that, his wife came to home, having just heard about a woman, who had conceived after having taken a shower in the rain. Despite her husband's objections, she insisted on telephoning the woman to find out if it was true. So, she phoned and she explained things to the woman, who replied, "What a stupid idea!". However, she must have heard the desperation for a child in her caller's voice and invited her and her husband over to talk.

When the husband heard of the invitation, he did not want to go; he did not want to appear as a man, who thought you could conceive by having a shower in a rain storm. But his wife was determined and so the man handed it over to the Lord and with a sinking heart set out for the house. He told how they had been received very well and much to his surprise he really clicked with this couple and found himself opening up to them in a way he had never done before. He had been, he said, a man who could never speak about the deep emotions in his heart and life, and he knew that this inability to talk was hindering his recovery from addiction – however, there he was, finding that he could talk to this couple in a way he had never been able to up to that point. Later on, he said, he realised, he said that God had led him to that couple because that was precisely the contact he needed for his journey.

Later, as I pondered what this man had shared, I saw that I – and indeed most of us – also come into a spiritual friendship with God because of a crisis. I had finally turned to God in this manner, because I had no other way to turn and in so doing discovered the wonder of God's wisdom. I, then, explicitly took the Lord as my Master and my Guide in a way I had not done before – but, as I listened to that man, I realised that it is so easy to slip into old well-worn ruts of thinking. Listening to him, I realised that my first duty as a partner and co-operator of God is to ask my friend and Lord what he wants and where it is he knows we need to go and I realised that of late I had not been doing that. I had just assumed that my thoughts were also God's and that my ways were also God's.

Listening to that man, I realised again, that truth is something that must be done, not just professed. If I have accepted the Lord as my guide, then I must let him guide me. However, I have also realised that there was something even more important that I learned that morning – I had not gone to that meeting to hear something vital for myself, but I did. Just like that man, you can do something for one reason and the Lord can use it to give you something else – something even more important.

### Diary

Last Thursday, I was sitting in the Blessed Sacrament Chapel for my hour of prayer, when someone came into the small room and said to me, in English, "Good afternoon". He came towards me smiling and I shook hands, but was puzzled, for while I knew the man well, I thought that he was from the Parish, and wondered why he did not know that you did not speak in the Chapel. He sat down to pray while I tried to work out, where I knew him from and after a while I realised that he had been one of the prisoners, where I say Mass on a Tuesday. I was a tad distraught, for I would have wanted to greet him with a big smile and congratulations on being out. But I had missed it, because I had not been able to place him.

I wonder how many other things I mess up, because I see or hear them in the right context and so do not see what is required of me?

## Do what you say!

However, in this case I was given a second chance, for he was waiting for me outside the room when I had finished my prayer and so I was able to greet him properly and also give him a little something to help him on his journey.

God bless,

Terry