

Catholic Men's Ministries Of Indian River County Florida

Saint Francis of Assisi has said "Preach the Gospel at all times, and if necessary use words." Meaning, you need to show yourself doing God's work. Just as scandal is the worst sin those of notoriety can commit because it breeds imitation, conversely those of notoriety displaying their commitment to God, in any environment, breeds imitation as well. And that imitation can lead to eternal redemption.

Church at the 19th Hole By Robert Borelli



I got to tell you Dan, that was a rough 18 holes. Used my sand wedge more than I ever had to and found the water and the woods more than I found the fairways. Anyway Dan, since you had a great round, you get the honors to buy the drinks.

I never understand your logic Pete, why does the guy with the best round always have to buy?

Because it has to be that way. Just like on the course the one that has the best last Hole goes up first, so the one with the best last round gets to go up to the 19th Hole bar first.

Going to the 19th Hole bar first? How does that translate into buying the drinks?

Look Dan, let's put it this way, it's how the winner shows empathy for the loser. Besides, you owe me for not willing to join my foursome on Sunday mornings at Pine Crest. My foursome is dead last in the league standings. If you replaced our low guy that wants out anyway, and with your low handicap, we would be right up near the top.

Don't bring that up again Pete. Just because I'm a practicing Catholic and believe that Sundays are meant to give to God not to golf courses and Melissa and I go to church on Sundays and spend the afternoons volunteering at the Woman's Care Center, how does that make me your bad guy?

OK, since you brought it up, I don't think you're a bad guy. I just don't understand why you need to go to Church and do all those volunteering things. It's like you guys are on some kind of guilt trip. Hey, Colette and I give money to the Women's Care Center and many other worthy charities. Isn't money what they really want and need? Why do you feel you need to make a physical presence?

Alright, since somehow golf is off the table and you want to discuss religion let's do that. This is what I believe. Sure it's great to give money and I am pleased that you do that. And to a certain extent, I am sure God is pleased as well. But is that doing enough?

So what you are saying is that by Colette and I giving money, I mean we give a lot of money to help people, and by us giving this money it is not a good deed, and that God is not pleased?

OK! I will address your last comment first and I don't want to, but I will need to respond with my Preacher's Hat on. So here goes, as charity is concerned, you are way off track on what it means to please God. Sure, God expects you to give to people, especially the poor. But unless you give all your money to the poor, where is giving some of your money, your money that has little to do with any life style change, show any personal sacrifice you are making? What it really means to please God is when Jesus was sitting with His disciples near the temple treasury as He watched the rich contributing large sums of money, along came a widow with two small coins in her hand. The widow put her coins into the box. Jesus called His disciples and pointed out her action telling them that this poor widow put more into the treasury than all the others. Because the rich all gave out of their wealth, but she, out of her poverty, put in all she had to live on. Now that's giving to the poor. But to say that I too give all I have to the poor would be wrong because I don't. But I try to give as much as I can in money and make up the rest of it in donating my time. And by doing so, I do believe that although I may not be anywhere close to that poor widow in the above message, God is pleased at what I do.

So what are you are saying is that I need to do more then give money, I need to volunteer my time? I got to tell you it ain't going to happen. I'm too busy, no time to do time. I'll give more money if that's what I need to do to score more points with God.

Wow, are you lost. You have no idea what you just said. Scoring points with God? God has already given you all the points you deserve in wealth. Maybe you are not aware but you should be, that 90% of the world's population has less then you and you want God to give you more points? Man are you in a self-made sand trap that no man made wedge iron can ever get you out of. Too Busy? No time? What the Hell are you doing with your time? You're on some damn golf course three times a week.

Yeah, and I also work out at the gym getting my exercise every morning. Two things here, one, I work hard and I deserve to have some time to enjoy myself, and two, I need to work out at the gym to stay in shape and work off stress. Again, yes I am too busy; remember, I still work but I pay a lot of taxes to the government and they should pay to take care of all those poor people.

And God somehow needs to give you more points for being too busy and earning a lot of money so you could pay a lot of taxes so the government can take care of the poor? That the way you see it?

Hey I'm no different than most people in my position.

You are right on that point. But because they don't do something, does it mean that you don't have to do something? Are you part of a cattle herd that moves in one direction? I think not since you managed to rise to be a V.P. at Mass General.

OK, I concede that point to you. No I'm not or never was a part of any herd. I was and still am my own man. I got to where I am because I studied hard and worked hard. Call it my study and work ethics.

Do you not see the need of those same ethics in order to be on the good side of God? Let's talk about your morning task. Let me ask you this. You say you work out in the gym doing your exercises every morning. To what end do you exercise?

What are you talking about? Now you're going to tell me that God looks down on a healthy body? To what end? I'll tell you what end! To live a long healthy life, that end.

And at that End, then what?

I'm not following you.

OK so exercising will give you good health both in body and mind and that indeed is good. Given your good health, you should live to around 90. Me, since I don't work out as much as you do, probably end of life for me is around 83. So using statistics you should walk this earth around 7 more years than me. So you are in good physical condition, not a bad looking guy, and you make a lot of money that you will be able to walk around with for an additional seven years.

OK! Thanks for the good looking comment, not sure I agree, but Thanks anyway. So I take care of myself, both physically and financially. What's your point?

Alright, I'll get to my point with a little movie nostalgic quiz. I don't know about you but I am a fan of the old movies. My two favorites are the 1938 version of the Adventures of Robin Hood starring Errol Flynn and the 1964 version of The Train starring Burt Lancaster. These two actors are at the top of my favorites. Both in my estimate were what I call real men and were real good actors. What do you think they had in common?

OK, I'll play your little guessing game. Here goes: They were like me, physically fit, and again, like me, using your words, they were good looking, they did their own movie stunts, and here's where I think you're going. Like me, they also made a lot of money. Did I get it right?

Absolutely not! But true to form I'm not surprised at your answers. What you missed, which was my point, is that they are both gone. Not here anymore. They may be alive in old movies but today they are dead. Physical fitness, good looks, and making a lot of money didn't spare them death. If you want to use a metaphor, how about that they are now in the hereafter. If the hereafter, for you, only has a religious connotation, then using a secular version, they are somewhere after here. And once in the after here there is no possible way for anyone to make any wrong a right.

OK, I'm Lost. Got any more talk in you?

Yes I do! You are right in that lost you are. To continue with my Preacher Hat on, God loves the lost and wants their redemption so as to be with him in the hereafter because he created them. We all know this as going to Heaven. So God gave you, and everyone else he created, a plan to be with Him in Heaven. Call it a path to follow that He clearly describes in the Bible, both in the Old and the New Testament. But God also gave you free will. There is no other way to judge your worthiness, to be with God in Heaven, unless you willingly follow God's path to get to him. The path is so important that when God saw His people abusing his plan, He sent his only son Jesus down to earth to reinforce the plan. But they rejected him and by the will of the Father, they executed His Son. So Jesus died of and for our Sins. His resurrection from the dead on the third day freed all of us from the sin of death which is described as life ever after.

OK, I get all of that, your hero actors are dead and someday, hopefully not too soon, I too will be dead and I get that as well. That said I do believe in the hereafter whether by the religious or secular description. And yes, even though Collette and I do not attend Mass, we are both on the books as being Catholics. Not practicing, but Catholics in our beliefs.

That's good but back to your first comment, you said "It's like you guys are on some kind of guilt trip". Before I take my Preacher's Hat off, I need to address your comment. What you would call guilt trip, I call giving back. Giving our time doing God's work is our way of thanking God for what we have been given. The gift, as I described earlier, about being in the top 10% group of fortunate humans that God created, that have enough food to eat, that were born in a safe and free country, that had parents that had the desire and the means to educate us, that gave us a comfortable home to grow up in, and finally that exposed us to a religion that taught us moral values and a belief in a God and a Heaven. So yes, there is some guilt associated with giving back.

Wow, I never knew these things were in you. You probably would have made a great priest. How come this stuff about you never came up? I have known you for at least 10 years?

I am today what I was yesterday and the ten plus years you have known me. Saint Francis of Assisi has said "Preach the Gospel at all times, and if necessary use words." Well, you struck a chord with your guilt trip comment that necessitated me to use words. But simply speaking, you can use God's gifts and your free will to either make your heaven right here on earth with money, fame, thrills, excitement, and golfing every day. But those things die when you die. Or, you can follow God's plan and never die. With free will, God gave you the choice. Sorry if I got a little harsh with you.

Not at all, I had it coming. And talk about "guilt trips", you just laid a whole lot of them on my doorstep. Wow! I never took the time to think about the real important matters in life and the real purpose of my being or to be thankful for the gifts that God handed me.

Tell me about the Women's Care Center, what do they do?

You would love what they do. The Woman's Care Center offers free ultrasounds to pregnant woman. Most of these woman are single and they come into the center sometimes thinking about an abortion. Instead, they are offered a free ultrasound and once they see that what's inside of them is a real living child that belongs and is part of them, 90% of them choose to carry the baby to term. At that point folks like Melissa and myself kick in. We are part of the counseling team. We teach them how to be good parents through parenting classes. We get involved with literacy training if they dropped out and need to finish school. I work on self-sufficiency education by teaching them how to balance check books and balance their income versus their expenses. Melissa gets more involved with them during their pregnancy and councils them until they carry to term. I must tell you there is no greater joy then to see these girls carry to term and actually see their babies for the first time. There is never enough tear wiping tissues in the room when that happens. To me, this is doing God's work and not only do I think I need to do it, I love to do it. To me it is truly being in the grace of God and in a state of complete contentment. And by the way, going to Mass on Sundays and other days where the word of God is proclaimed, and the receiving of communion that literally places Jesus inside of you, is the first place to find complete contentment.

Ok Dan, so you struck a chord with me. I am nowhere near a state of contentment much less complete contentment. You placed me on a guilt trip for, as I said, being on the books as being Catholic but not a practicing Catholic. I can see that being too busy, for me, is only an excuse to hide my faith. Whereas you stand out by your faith, I hide mine to fit into a materialistic society that, for the most part, looks down on a man of faith. There were other signs that I should have picked up as when Collette showed a great interest in volunteering at the Woman's Care Center. I missed her point that she was trying to tell me that we needed to work on practicing our faith. I'll talk to Collette but I'm sure that she would agree. Can you sign us up for volunteer work at the Center?

Of course I will and Melissa would be thrilled to have Collette working with her.

Oh! Also we would like to start going to Mass again. Could you put us in touch with one of your Priests? By the way which church do you guys attend?

Sure I can give you a contact number for a great priest. The Church we go to is on the beach side and it is The Church of the Redeemer.

Why am I not surprised? Thank you Dan, I'm pretty sure today was the start on changing my wayward life and the beginning of, by practicing my faith, putting me on my own path to complete contentment. Sorry you had to use words to do it. And speaking of Churches, because on this day my real purpose in life was shown to me, I am forever going to call this little drinking water hole, The Church at the 19th Hole.

THE ONLY TIME TO JUDGE ONE'S LIFE IS AT THE END OF ONE'S LIFE AND THE ONE TO BE JUDGED, WILL NOT BE ASKED TO JUDGE.