

All Saints A,B,C 2022

Last month, Bishop O'Connell preached before student representatives of every Catholic elementary and high school in the diocese and he asked, "What do you want to be when you grow up?" The answer he was looking for was, "I want to be a saint.

How do saints think? What questions do saints ask?

If I knew a vast fortune was available to me upon certain conditions, would I not investigate those conditions? Have I ever investigated the claims of Christianity: "Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and decay destroy, and thieves break in and steal. But store up treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor decay destroys, nor thieves break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there also will your heart be. (Matthew 6:19-21)

Do I have I a right to say there is no life higher than this, any more than a rose has a right to say there is no higher life than a rose? Have I ever investigated the supernatural life to which it is said a man must be re-born as Nicodemus was? Now this is eternal life, that they should know you, the only true God, and the one whom you sent, Jesus Christ. (John 17:3).

Do I know, by reason and with certitude, all the truths of the natural order? Is it possible that there may be truths:

- ✓ beyond my reason,
- ✓ which I do not yet know,
- ✓ but could know,
- ✓ and if I did know,

would do to my reason what a telescope does to my eye? Am I teachable – even by God? Is there a certain disposition needed on my part which pride and sin obscure, which prevents me from discovery?

Be earnest, therefore, and repent. “Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will enter his house and dine with him, and he with me.”

(Apocalypse 3:19b-20). The latch to the Kingdom of God is on the inside, not the outside. God breaks down no doors. He is a gentleman. He knocks.

Do I ever think of what will happen to me when I die? Friends and relatives will gather round like vultures and ask: “How much did he leave?” But the recording angel will ask: “How much did he take with him?” “What profit is there for one to gain the whole world and forfeit his life?” (Mark 8:36).

To those who say, “Now this is my idea of religion.” Do they ever say: “Now this is my idea of a triangle, or my idea of astronomy, or my idea of the multiplication table?” Although society is moving in that direction when they can no longer define what it means to be a woman.

Would it not be better to inquire: “What is God’s idea of religion?” Do I think that I have something better than what God wills? Do I forget that the good is what God wills?

A toddler would not have a toy for ten minutes without tearing it apart and knowing how it is made. Will I live 40, 60 or 80 years without knowing why I am here or where I am going?

If I let the final step of my journey determine all the intermediate steps of my life, why do I so regulate my life? Is my attitude like that of St. Augustine: “I want to be good, Dear Lord, a little later on, but not now.”

To those who say, “I want a religion but a religion without authority.” In other words, I want a religion which will let me do what I please. The choice is not: Will I or will I not accept an authority? Rather the choice is: Will I accept the authority of Christ? Do I want a religion that is right when I am right, or a religion that is right when the world is wrong? “Let no man deceive himself: if any man among you seems to be wise in

this world, let him become a fool, that he may be wise. For the wisdom of the world is foolishness with God.” (1 Corinthians 3:18-19).

To those who say, “Religion can give me nothing,” well perhaps religion right now can give me nothing; but religion can certainly take something away:

- ✓ my pride,
- ✓ my conceit,
- ✓ and my self-sufficiency.

Before the house can be built, a hole must be dug. “Amen I say to you, unless you be become as little children, you shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven.” (Matthew 18:3).

I am a sinner. Then let me begin with these facts: Christ forgave sins – “Your sins are forgiven you.” (Matthew 9:5). He then communicated that power to others – “Receive the Holy Spirit. Whose sin you forgive, are forgiven; and whose sins you retain, are retained.” (John 20:22-23) Where is that power to forgive sins now? Who claims it? Might it not be worth investigating?

And Christ prayed for the unity of one fold, and one shepherd. “I pray not only for them, but also for those who will believe in me through their word, so that they may all be one,

as you, Father, are in me and I in you, that they also may be in us, that the world may believe that you sent me. And I have given them the glory you gave me, so that they may be one, as we are one, I in them and you in me, that they may be brought to perfection as one, that the world may know that you sent me, and that you loved them even as you loved me. (John 17:20-23). Where on the face of the earth is there one and the same Christ preached now that was preached in the first century? Where? Right here, in the one, holy, Catholic and apostolic Church.

This is how a saint thinks and these are the questions a saint asks.