

## Msgr. Bill's Weekly Letter...

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

Most of you who are reading this letter, myself included, were baptized when we were infants. We were brought to baptism by loving parents who saw this as a sacred duty.

Baptism is that entry sacrament where, in a two hour (or less) ceremony, we are made to be daughters and sons of our Holy Father. It was a beautiful gift given to me and all those who have been brought to baptism.

Jesus calls us to ongoing conversion. Some may think because we're baptized, we do not need a *conversion*. Conversion is one of the words that is used in our metanoia. It is not so much having something done to me, which is true, it has the connotation of continually turning our face to the Lord.

*This metanoia is a deeply internal, readdressing of one's sin-prone humanness to choosing God's will. This process is now seen as an ongoing life journey, not an instant occurrence. It is the moment when Jesus' followers feel he or she is walking on the road of discipleship with Jesus.* (The Priest vol.78, No. 12)

Alexandre Havard's latest book is, **Coached by Joan of Arc: Lessons in Virtuous Leadership**. While not a theological book his chapter, *Create a Plan for Personal Growth*, has some wonderful advice on enhancing our spiritual growth. Following is a short overview.

1. **CREATE A MAGNANIMOUS ENVIRONMENT AROUND YOU.** We can build a climate of magnanimity with the books we read, the company we keep, and what music we listen to. There are many moments we can intentionally bring into our lives. At least once a week, I indulge with the finale of Mahler's *Resurrection*, that always lifts me up. [My favorite is Dudamel's rendition because it has the lyrics since I don't understand German.]
2. **LEARN TO EXPERIENCE THE GREATNESS OF ORDINARY LIFE.** He reflects on how his mother managed the house. *"Through her talents, which was a manifestation of her greatness, she gave us all a sense of our own dignity and encouraged us always to give of ourselves."* Greatness comes in many ways.
3. **BE ASTONISHED BY THINGS GREATER THAN YOURSELF.** In part he writes, *My free heart became accustomed to saying, yes, to the divine impulses and inspirations manifesting themselves in the depth of my being. I opened my heart to transcendence.*
4. **MAKE A DAILY PLAN FOR SPIRITUAL AND CULTURAL GROWTH, SETTING PRECISE TIME FOR MEDITATION, READING, AND SPORTS.**
5. **DO NOT COMPARE YOURSELF TO ANYONE.** The only person to whom we should compare ourselves is Jesus. We will never reach that goal but will always have more capacity to grow.
6. **DO NOT LET OCCASIONS FOR ACTION PASS YOU BY.**

Get the book. You will not be disappointed.

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*Msgr. Bill*

