

From Fr. Tom Butler's Homily Library

Good Public Relations

In our gospel today Jesus is really looking good. He healed so many sick and poor souls that His reputation spread so far multitudes were streaming to Him from everywhere. He was in such demand He told His companions to have a boat ready for a fast getaway in case the crowds got too big and unruly and He needed to have a fast way out.

Things right now are also looking good in my old hometown of Pittsburgh. People there are experiencing a definite rise in their hopes and desires for another Super Bowl. There is a lot of talk going around as to how they are going to get the best out of their team. Personally, I think they should go to an expert. For example, Bear Bryant knew how to get the very best out of people. He may have been just a poor plow hand from Arkansas, but he did know how to hold a team together. He knew how to lift some men up and he knew how to calm others down until finally he had a team that had only one heartbeat. Then he lifted them all up. He told them if anything goes wrong, I did it. If anything goes half good, we did it. And if anything goes really well, you did it. Bear said that was all it really takes to get people to win football game for you.

That is fantastic. Only a great person knows how to take blame and how to give credit. Sometimes it means being criticized for things that are not entirely your fault. At other times it means watching from the sidelines as others are praised for the things you are responsible for. It is tough to take someone else's lumps. It is even tougher to watch someone else take your bows.

I hope you realize that is part and parcel of what Christianity is all about. It is important we make others look good while you yourself try to keep your humility intact. St. Paul describes love in this way: It is not rude; it is not self-seeking; it is not easily angered; it doesn't remember the wrongs; it always protects, trusts and always hopes and perseveres. And I think it was St. Peter who put in his two cents and said, "Above all, love each other deeply because love covers a multitude of sins."

Making others look good is not just good public relations. No. It is essential to Christian living and Christian loving. It is something at which we must all excel if we are going to make it to that great Super Bowl in the sky.

**Inspired by Mark 3:7-12*