

Extracted from St John Vianney September 23, 2012 Bulletin

Not Enough by Carl Beyer & Friends

Let me start by giving you bravos for coming to Church and reading the bulletin! While these two activities are commendable, they alone are not enough.

We all need a good prayer life. This means daily prayers, preferably morning and evening prayers - not always easy, I know, because morning prayers always escape me in my busy-ness, but to evening/nightly prayers I am pretty faithful.... though God knows even these are way too short and I am trying to improve. But these three actions alone are not enough.

Now, put down that snack you are eating and say Grace. Grace is not only for “formal” meals or really “good” meals. When we say the standard grace of “Bless us Lord and these thy gifts which we are about to receive,” we are not saying Grace in thanks for the “pleasure” of eating. No, we are saying Grace for the life-sustaining nourishment we are about to receive. While many of us take in too much nourishment, myself included, without God's gift of food we would not be here long. Grace, at least in my opinion, should be said for all food or drink that passes through that hole in your face. But these four actions are still not enough.

Let us not forget charity. The Church asks us to give 5% to the Church and 5% to other charities. Thank you to all of you who drop an envelope in our collections box. But if your charity stops there you are missing 50% of your recommended charity. Personally I might recommend your splitting this, half to local causes and half to causes of the world. Worldly you can give to CFCA or World Vision or Catholic Charities or another of your choice. Locally we have St. Felix Pantry, Birth Right, Haven House, St Vincent De Paul and numerous others. But, still, these five actions are still not enough.

Much of the Old Testament we cannot easily follow, lest we believe it is a greater sin to kill an ox than a slave. But Exodus:20 is timeless. These Ten Commandments alone, if followed, would lead us toward the road to Heaven on earth. Take time to read the Ten Commandments and see if you are ready to meet your maker. Reread the commandments and follow them faithfully. And still, these six actions are not enough.

Now, you are likely thinking, “Carl, if I am doing the six previous actions, what could I possibly be missing?” You are saying to yourself that you would be close to sainthood if you did these six actions faithfully and to the best of your ability. How can more be asked of us? What else can we do? In our reading of the Bible did we miss something in our Lord, Jesus' teaching? How can these six actions not be enough?

Matthew 22:36-40: The Greatest Commandment. [36]”Teacher, which commandment is the greatest?” [37] He said to him, “You shall love the Lord, your God, with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind. [38]This is the greatest and the first commandment. [39]The second is like it. You shall love your neighbor as yourself. [40]On these two commandments depend all the Law and Prophets.”

Jesus' first commandment should be well know and followed by all. The second, with its seven words, "You shall love your neighbor as yourself," is deep. Think about this. Most of us are not mean to ourselves. Why then are we mean to others? Most of us are not rude to ourselves. So why are we rude to others? Most of us do not curse ourselves. Why then do we curse others? Most of us do not speak badly of ourselves. Why then do we speak badly of others? If only the Lord would have added these words: "You shall love those neighbors WHO YOU LIKE as yourselves." How much easier would that be? Nope, we are commanded to love those who are mean, are rude, and who treat us badly. Lord, that is hard. Our basic instinct when someone treats us badly is to strike back, to "put them in their place." Now, I know this commandment is one of the hardest, but let us be honest with ourselves and discern whether we are truly trying to follow Jesus' commandment, or are we simply living for ourselves? Me, Me, Me and Me. Do not be fooled; Jesus said whoever we meet is our neighbor. Darn, that includes that rude, mean neighbor. So follow this commandment and all the previous actions, and that shall be enough.

Go forth and strive to follow our God and our Lord commandments. Go forth and be the shining Roman Catholic example. Go forth and be blessed. God Bless You All.