

THE HARD ROAD OF DISCIPLINE

Mark Suslenko

Abraham Lincoln is said to have remarked that “discipline is choosing between what you want now and what you want most.” What is it that you desire most? This is a powerful question that must be asked and answered if we want to avoid a haphazard, disjointed, and chaotic life. It also must be asked and answered if we claim to be a person of faith who is committed to living the Gospel of Jesus Christ. We all have smaller desires that motivate us throughout the day. I may desire to complete a project that has been sitting undone for some time or to spend some quality time with someone I love. But at the end of it all, what is it that you really desire?

St. Augustine tells us that our hearts are restless until they rest in God. If we really believe that we are lovingly and intentionally fashioned and created by a God who wills us into being — and that we are destined to live eternally with that same God in heaven — then these are wise words indeed. Therefore, in order to be true to our real nature, the answer to the question of what we desire most ought to be, “Union with God.”

If we are distracted by our lesser desires, we can easily lose touch with our truth and quickly find ourselves off track and restless. But a person who lives a truly disciplined life is always able to call him or herself back to the greatest desire, to put their wants and impulses in check, and to do what is necessary to achieve the greater goal. For the believer, this can only be accomplished by developing a habit of strong, centred, and focused prayer. The discipline of prayer allows us to keep our relationship with God fresh so that we become best friends with Him and always stay connected and in touch in one way or another.

It is very possible for relationships to go sour, even our relationship with God. While God never abandons us, we can certainly turn our backs on Him. In doing so, we may find ourselves recognizing His presence and surprises less and less and even find ourselves less willing to put ourselves out there for the advancement of the Gospel. Those lesser desires and impulses can gain great control. It is the discipline of prayer that allows us to become the very likeness of God! We then become His true disciples by living and acting in our world as He would live and act in it. The gift of contemplation keeps God in clear focus and our hearts set on our true desire: union with Him.

It will not be easy at first. Who among us really likes discipline? But we all know that the maturity process always involves reluctance, pain, stretching, and honesty. We are constantly learning new lessons about life, God, ourselves, others, and our world, and we must vigilantly be willing to leave one way of doing things in pursuit of another of greater value. Knowing that our ultimate desire is union with God, we can then go about the task of true discipleship and begin living the vision Jesus taught. It is a vision that involves great self-denial, suffering, and possibly even death. However, all of these are always in service of obtaining our ultimate goal.

Life teaches us some hard lessons and can easily disappoint. But God’s ever-present love is always available to transform even the most self-focused of hearts, and His holiness touches all of His children. It is our task, then, to ensure that everything possible is done to preserve and respect the sacredness of life and the dignity of every human being.

God’s vision has a great deal to say about the immigrant, the homeless, our economic system, power, wealth, distribution of the world’s good, the value and place of work, abortion, euthanasia, war, violence, and all of the other ills plaguing our world. The problem is that we often seek secular solutions to difficulties that have a spiritual base. The person with a truly disciplined life can recognize the difference and act accordingly.

Source: Sunday Reflection from piconnections blog with permission



St Mary’s
Parish
Haddington
Road

*Serving
the
Community*

*Serving
the
Family*

*Serving
the
City*



**ANNUAL COLLECTION
NEXT SUNDAY
31 AUGUST-1 SEPTEMBER**

In his letter in support of this year's appeal for the social support agency of the Archdiocese, Archbishop Diarmuid writes: "For nearly 80 years now Crosscare has delivered services to respond to many unmet needs in our society. It cares for young people whose voices may be unheard, for those who may be hungry, or without a home. Day by day, more and more people experience the dedicated support of Crosscare when they are welcomed in a spirit of respect, dignity and love. They are met as equals with the belief that everyone is created in the image and likeness of God...."

On behalf of the staff volunteers and vulnerable adults in Crosscare, I would like to thank you for your generous support over the years. I know that all who work at Crosscare take their work and responsibility very seriously and I urge you to support them once again in this appeal."

In today's more prosperous Ireland, Crosscare is still called upon to help thousands of vulnerable people, both individuals and families in difficult situations.

Some of the work of the past year includes:

- 175,326** hot meals served in our cafes & residences.
- 14,000** hampers provided as short term food support.
- 986** people accommodated in six homeless services.
- Several projects** for your people in challenging situations.
- 944** addictions counselling sessions for **117** people.
- 455** parents and **400** students attended drug info workshops.
- 5000+** households from **125** countries used the information and advocacy service. Of those attending **1400+** households were either homeless or at risk of homelessness.
- 4,184** young people were supported by Youth Services in Dublin and Wicklow.
- 670** tonnes of food and non-food items were (donated by manufacturers, distributors and growers) as well as from parish communities were redistributed.
- We made **61,180** phone calls to vulnerable people.

Inspired by the example and teachings of Jesus Christ, Crosscare has:

A **VISION** of a society where all people have the opportunity to fulfil their potential.

A **MISSION** to provide innovation and relevant service to those most in need

The Haddington Road parish contribution in 2017 was €2,870 and in 2018, €3,040.

**THANK YOU FOR YOUR GENEROSITY
NEXT SUNDAY**

This year's 'Back to School' will mark a real landmark in the history of the 'Haddiers' schools as St. Brigid's Primary School and St. Mary's Boys' School, both on the church grounds, merge into the new St Christopher's Primary School on Haddington Road.

This project has had a long and sometimes very difficult history, going back as far as 2011, or even earlier, when the idea was first mooted. There have been a number of false dawns and other difficulties. That it has now happened is due to the commitment and determination of many people at all levels: the Department of Education, the schools' management and staff, architects and builders. They have shown great commitments and dedication at all times.

The school will have 630 students. In the spirit of the two wonderful schools it replaces it will be an open and welcoming environment in the wide multicultural, multireligious tradition that is already established.

The Principal of St Christopher's will be Ms Annemarie Hogan, previous principal of St Brigid's. The vice-Principal will be Ms Margaret Irwin, who held this post at St Mary's. We are delighted that, apart from the usual moves, the staff will largely be the same great people who have done such a wonderful job at 'Haddiers' for so many years now.

We wish everybody well in the coming few challenging weeks when they will have to settle in and find their way in a new environment. Like St Brigid's and St Mary's, St Christopher's will be a school that lives and works in the present, while being conscious of its proud history and also looking to the future as it faces new challenges and many opportunities.

The official opening will take place when things have settled

IN MEMORIAM

11am: Sr Anne Marie Stacey (1st Anniversary)

Masses and Confession

Sundays: Vigil, 6pm (Saturday), 9.30am, 11am, 5pm

Croatian Community Mass 6.30pm

Daily masses 10am and 12.40pm, Saturday 10am only

-**Rosary** daily after 10am mass

Adoration Blessed Sacrament, Weds 10.30-12.40

LAST WEEK'S COLLECTIONS

1st Collection: €260 (15th August)

1st Collection: €1,075

Share Collection: €776

Weekday collections: €280

THANK YOU