

SPIRITUAL REFLECTION

The **Knights of Columbus** are undertaking an effort to write reflections on each of our stained glass windows. The Brother Knights are trying to share the joy of the Gospels with you through the beautiful images as did the early Catholics in their churches. The first reflection is on ***“The Parable of the Good Samaritan.”***

The Good Samaritan

Luke, Chapter 10 verses 29-37

But because he wished to justify himself, he said to Jesus, “And who is my neighbor?” Jesus replied, “A man fell victim to robbers as he went down from Jerusalem to Jericho. They stripped and beat him and went off leaving him half-dead. A priest happened to be going down that road, but when he saw him, he passed by on the opposite side. Likewise a Levite came to the place, and when he saw him, he passed by on the opposite side. But a Samaritan traveler who came upon him was moved with compassion at the sight. He approached the victim, poured oil and wine over his wounds and bandaged them. Then he lifted him up on his own animal, took him to an inn and cared for him. The next day he took out two silver coins and gave them to the innkeeper with the instruction, ‘Take care of him. If you spend more than what I have given you, I shall repay you on my way back. Which of these three, in your opinion, was neighbor to the robbers’ victim?’ He answered, ‘The one who treated him with mercy.’ Jesus said to him, ‘Go and do likewise.’”



Personal reflection of Ken Low --

The Parable of the Good Samaritan begins with a question posed to Jesus, "Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?" Indeed, this is the central question for every Christian today as well! The ultimate answer: "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and all your strength, and with all your mind; and your neighbor as yourself." In answer to the follow-up question posed to Jesus "And who is my neighbor?"—Jesus responds with the familiar Parable of the Good Samaritan (Luke 10:29-37). A man, presumably a Jew, was stripped, beaten and left for dead along the roadside. As they passed by him, two Jewish "holy men" each chose not to aid the man as he lay there beaten and bleeding. Then a Samaritan (a people despised by Jews) came by, "had compassion," bound the wounds, took the injured man to an inn and tended his injuries that night. In the morning, he paid the bill, asked the innkeeper to take care of the man and promised to pay him for his efforts on his return!

Reflecting, we will perceive that Jesus has woven numerous lessons into this parable...perhaps the most important being that every person is our neighbor, even those whom we may not particularly like, who are ungrateful and even our enemies. We, as His followers, are called to love them "as yourself." Jesus is telling us that we are to be an extension of God's unconditional love to our neighbors! As Fr. Gabriel of St. Mary Magdalen, O.C.D. puts it, "God creates creatures, not because He has need of them, for they can add nothing to his beatitude and essential glory; but He creates them solely to extend His infinite goodness outside Himself...This goodness is the cause of your being and your life..." *

If we are going to love our neighbor, we need to understand what real love looks like. Unfortunately, our society has seriously warped many peoples' perceptions of what love is. In the Bible, however, 1 Cor 13:4-8 describes it beautifully: "Love is patient and kind; love is not jealous or boastful; it is not arrogant or rude. Love does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; it does not rejoice at wrong but, rejoices in the right. Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Love never ends." This is how we are to treat our neighbor!

The Covid-19 pandemic has presented virtually unlimited opportunities to love our neighbors... many truly heroic ways, necessitating the risking of one's own life! The media, thankfully, has rushed to highlight these, both the whimsical and the heroic. Whether the perpetrators of these acts of love realize it or not, they are truly "Good Samaritans." But Jesus is, in a certain way, asking for more than this! He is expecting us to show love to our neighbors in the humdrum of our daily lives, not just in times of crisis, and He gives many, many opportunities each day: Being patient with our children or spouse; greeting the checkout clerk by name with a cheerful smile; thanking people for doing the things that we have just come to expect; letting the other person be right most of the time; choosing not to hold a grudge; not judging someone, not cursing the person who cut you off in traffic, and on and on. Just look at 1 Corinthians. The outline is there for us! Reflect on it at the end of each day. How have you loved your neighbor today? What opportunities did you fail to take? Think about it...the reward is "eternal life"!

*Divine Intimacy