

Listen to Mary: Do as Jesus Says

In the course of his pilgrimage to Loreto, Pope John Paul II spoke on several occasions. Following are excerpts from some of the addresses he gave at that time.

It seems to me that I could put to you this question: how could we respond better to the expectations of the whole people of God, especially in the grave difficulties of the present hour? In this Marian city I think I could reply: by being authentic imitators of Our Lady.



Like her may you know how to keep all these things in your heart which the Redeemer will suggest to you when you seek him with joy, perseverance and trepidation.

Let your mission to your neighbor be like that of Mary, in eager love serving her relation, Elizabeth. Let your mission be full of God through the grace that activates and guides it, solicitous through the love that characterizes it, disinterested because it seeks no human recompense, discreet because of the intimacy of the message it must carry.

As the Virgin shared little in the triumphs of her Son, but was very near to him when he hung on the Cross, so you too, not looking for the ephemeral satisfactions of the earth but thinking of human sufferings, must know how to accept with ineffable dedication the extreme consequences of the spiritual fatherhood or motherhood of those whom Christ has entrusted to you, and of the whole human race which has need of your example and witness.

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While in these moments we are contemplating the great heights of the sanctity of Mary, let us listen in

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silence to some of her words, precious pearls, preserved in the Gospels. May the words of Mary have a profound resonance in our souls, and may they stimulate us to a full Christian life before God, the Church and the world.

"Behold the handmaid of the Lord, be it done to me according to your word."

Those are the words of Mary which end the sublime dialogue between her and the Angel Gabriel in the mystery of the Annunciation, and which enable us to get a glimpse of the depth of her soul, become the most docile instrument, serene and sensitive of the action of God. When the most holy Virgin pronounced these words — St. Athanasius admirably comments — she meant: "I am the tablet on which the writer may write what pleases him. The Lord of the Universe writes, let him do whatever he wishes."

Let us listen again to the Virgin Mary: "Do what Jesus tells you."

Those are the words Mary said to the servants at the wedding feast in Cana of Galilee; and there followed the miracle of the water changed into wine.

Those words she, as our mother, also says to each one of us.

Whoever professes himself a Christian, that is a follower of Christ, must do what Jesus says, allowing himself to be totally involved in his message. The Gospel, the whole Gospel, with its maxims and demands — which often appear paradoxical to today's mentality — must animate the life of every Christian but especially the lives of those who, like you, wish to be faithful to the personal commitments for the coming of the Kingdom of Christ, of which you wish to be witnesses and to disseminate in your own surroundings.

So, give an incisive witness of a shining faith, without human respect, without feigning, without fear; and show an active love for all, especially the weak, the poor, the needy in a spirit of sincere service.

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You young people — fearless but not impatient of the wisdom transmitted to you by your educators — have the duty to testify by your lives and conduct to the beauty and validity of the Gospel message, and to show to the men of our time the shining face of Christ. Have the courage to do this! Have confidence because yours will be the victory! This is the assignment which I am putting in your strong hands and generous hearts.

May the Lord Jesus, the friend of young people, sustain you in this task, and may you be encouraged by the Apostolic Blessing which I now impart to you and to all those dear to you — parents, relations, superiors and friends.

More Opinions

Let's Listen To Pontiff

Editor:

In years gone by when the Teacher was with us, some Pharisees and Sadducees left Jerusalem to see Him. They were good people who not only kept the law, they were learned in the law, too. They were concerned with real theological issues — whether there was to be a resurrection of the body. They sought out Jesus and proposed their question. Receiving their answer they left Him, happy or unhappy according to whether or not He agreed with them. They left Him and are never heard from again because all they wanted was a justification of their own views. They didn't want to be taught by Him. They didn't use their eyes for seeing nor their ears for hearing. There was no place in their hearts, filled as they were with self-interest and self-esteem, for the teachings of a humble Savior, who wanted only to teach them how to save their souls.

Today, the person we call the Vicar of Christ is among us and it is distressing to me to hear so-called representatives of the Church he leads telling the media they are going to inform him about American liberal theology and he had better heed them and conform; that he had better start ordaining women now . . . or else!

When the Vicar of Christ does us the honor of visiting us one would think we would have the courtesy of listening to him and hearing what he

has to say, the humility to study his words and thoughts ere we proclaim to the world how proud and uncircumcised of heart we really are. One would not expect to hear how we are going to tell him, the only one among us who has the office of supreme teacher, how he should teach and rule the Church which has been entrusted to him.

He came unto his own and his own received him not.

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Grateful To Knights

Editor:

Last year our daughter brought home a book cover from school which was so startling in beauty and symbolism that I thought some word of gratitude should be spoken for it. I did not take the time then to do that.

This year I have another opportunity to speak that word of gratitude, for as this high school year began, she again covered her books with these exquisite covers which say at the bottom, "Gift of the Knights of Columbus, dedicated to stressing God in your life."

The cover features St. Elizabeth Ann Bayley Seton. One side carries a fine summary of her life. The other side depicts her in one little phase that says much about her. She is seen trudging up a hillside, through the snow, a yoke over her shoulders from which hang

two pails of spring water. Her shadow cast in the snow is a cross.

A paragraph in the summary explains: Elizabeth assumed the job of carrying the household water from a spring. The wooden yoke bearing the large pails cut into her flesh, and once a sister companion found her shoulders bleeding. But Elizabeth dismissed the incident by saying: "When the buckets are heavy, I think of the weight of the cross."

To the Knights of Columbus we owe a debt of thanks for this little jewel of a gift and for all of the other works they do to assist in "stressing God in our lives."

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Can't Ignore Soviet Threat

Editor:

Re my not so recent letter in the Courier-Journal.

Howard Easling, in his latest expose on the virtues of communism, might have a valid argument if he had properly interpreted the data. The gentleman fails to differentiate between "missiles" and "warheads." The former consist of the vehicles used to deliver nuclear payloads, while the latter are the payloads themselves. I do not argue the contention that America has twice as many missiles as the Soviet Union. The problems is that our intercontinental ballistic missiles are quickly becoming obsolete, due to the Russian

deployment of the SS-18 and SS-19 permitted under SALT II. To complicate matters, these two series of missiles are multiple intercontinental re-entry vehicles, each with a destructive capacity far greater than the typical American rocket. In the event of a nuclear war, the peace-loving Russians would destroy most of our Minutemen before they enter Soviet air space. At least 150 million Americans would die. Surely this would not be mentioned in the left-wing Progressive, a magazine fighting to publish a working diagram of the hydrogen bomb. To ignore the Soviet threat would be sheer folly, and only serve to endanger the lives of all Americans (including Communist sympathizers). SALT II, as an arms control pact, would not enrich the lives of the earth's people. It accounts for only two countries with nuclear capability.

Easling attempts to prove that God has not blessed us as a nation by citing the historical plights of blacks and Indians. He ignores our Constitution and the rights which it effectively guarantees. He disregards our unified struggles for the liberty which we hold so dear, and for which countless Americans have sacrificed their lives. He does not even consider our high standard of living. It is difficult to understand what Easling sees in the U.S.S.R. that the U.S. does not already have, save a Communist dictatorship. And if that means so much to him, let him move there.

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Decries Waste At Eatery

Editor:

The publicity about the Bread Walk has made me think about a tour my Cub Scout den recently took of a restaurant which is part of a national chain.

The manager demonstrated how the staff prepares hamburgers and cheeseburgers and then he showed us how the cooked food is kept warm until purchased. "In order to maintain quality," he said, "no food is kept more than 15 minutes after cooking. Of course, we try to estimate demand as closely as possible, but any food not sold after 15 minutes is thrown away." A trash barrel almost full of hamburgers and other food testified to the truth of his statements.

When I asked what percentage of the food has to be discarded, the manager shrugged apologetically and said, "About 30 per cent."

Thirty per cent! The wholesome, edible food thrown away by this and other fast food restaurants across this country must add up to a truly staggering amount each year.

Are we Americans in such a hurry that we have to have food in restaurants cooked and waiting for us when we walk in? From now on, I, at least, intend to patronize only restaurants where food is cooked to order.

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2 Books Commended

Editor:

The abortion issue has recently generated two excellent books and your readers may want to read them.

A PRIVATE CHOICE: Abortion in America in the Seventies by John T. Noonan Jr., 244 pages, published by the Free Press, was described by reviewer Basile J. Uddo as "a law book, a history book, a medical text and a moral treatise, yet it is eminently readable by anyone and everyone. If you read only one book about abortion, it should be John Noonan's A PRIVATE CHOICE — a book that is good beyond hope."

This month, Doubleday is publishing Dr. Bernard Nathanson's book, Aborting America. Dr. Nathanson, a prominent New York obstetrician-gynecologist, led the fight for repeal of abortion laws then directed a large abortion clinic. In 1974, he resigned his position, publicly stating that he had "presided over 60,000 deaths." In Aborting America, Dr. Nathanson tells how and why his views have changed and why he now supports a constitutional amendment on the right to life.

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