

The Saint Raphael Link

Some Periodic Ramblings of the Prior

August 2015 (Issue 19)



Dear Members

I feel sure that you will have heard or read Matthew 13:1-8 - the parable of the sower. It is a story which highlights failures in hopes and ambitions; the same sort of disappointments which we all may have to face within our lives at one time or another.

Jesus certainly had to face a whole lot of apparent failure; and He knew full well the pain involved. He was born and raised in Nazareth and his own people rejected Him. His Hebrew countrymen ignored His message and what about His twelve handpicked apostles? Well, one of them sold Him out for thirty pieces of silver and the others fled when He was crucified. Peter wasn't too swift to take His message to heart, Thomas was the doubter, and the others weren't much better either.

Well; up to this point my remarks all sound terribly dismal and discouraging. But my point is that we need to remember that Jesus did not let apparent failure stop Him.

In the parable, Jesus went on to speak about a crop that yielded a harvest in successful amounts, some yields bringing spectacular success.

You and I, like all good farmers who continually face disasters of every sort, need to seriously engage ourselves in the enterprise of faith and hope, planting the best of what we have, and then letting God do the rest.

Our present world is a mess, but it always has been. We need to see that there is also an amazing amount of goodness in it. The greatest miracle of all isn't found at Lourdes, Fatima or even England's Nazareth (in Walsingham): it's found in those around us, in those who are, in spite of terrible odds, yielding up love, kindness, caring, and sensitivity thirty, sixty and a hundred fold.

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The Christian belief is that at the end of our lives we will meet Christ face to face. When that time comes, how will He judge us, and by what criteria?

In the 25th Chapter of St Matthew's gospel there is a very big clue:
"Before him will be gathered all the nations, and he will separate them one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats, and he will place the sheep at his right hand, but the goats at the left. Then the King will say to those at his right hand, 'Come, O blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world; for I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you clothed me, I was sick and you visited me, I was in prison and you came to me.' Then the righteous will answer him, 'Lord, when did we see thee hungry and feed thee, or thirsty and give thee drink? And when did we see thee a stranger and welcome thee, or naked and clothed thee? And when did we see thee sick or in prison and visit thee?' And the King will answer them, 'Truly, I say to you, as you did it to one of the least of these my brethren, you did it to me.'

Now it seems to me that despite our many failed attempts at following our Blessed Lord's teachings, and being like the grain that fell on stony ground, there is still some hope.

Jesus knows our human failings; He knows our doubts, our fears and our disobedience. But if we persevere and seek to 'Sow the Seed' along the way; one day we will each be granted a share in the Eternal Harvest Home in Heaven. Amen.

+Geoffrey GRAND PRIOR



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Answers to Locations: 1. Dumfries / 2. Harrogate / 3. Truro

Calendar of Saints



Apostle Saint Matthias (1st Century.)

(Feast Day 9th August)

He was numbered among the Seventy. Then, when Judas who betrayed Christ had taken his own life, the disciples (120 men and women) convened to choose one who would take his place among the Twelve. They nominated two; Joseph (called Barsabas or Justus) and Matthias, then cast lots. The lot fell to Matthias, who henceforth was numbered among the Twelve (See Acts 1). Accounts of his Apostolate after this vary. According to some, he preached the Gospel in Ethiopia and met his martyrdom there. According to others, after visiting Ethiopia he returned to Judea, where he was tried and condemned by Ananias the High Priest, and stoned to death, then beheaded.

Story Corner



Have you tasted Jesus?

At the University of Chicago Divinity School, each year, they have what is called "Baptist Day." On this day, each one is to bring a lunch to be eaten outdoors in a grassy picnic area. Every "Baptist Day" the school would invite one of the greatest minds to lecture in the theological education centre.

One year they invited Dr. Paul Tillich. Dr. Tillich spoke for two and one-half hours attempting to prove that the resurrection of Jesus was false. He quoted scholar after scholar and book after book. He concluded that since there was no such thing as the historical resurrection, the religious tradition of the church was groundless, emotional mumbo-jumbo... because it was based on a relationship with a risen Jesus, who, in fact never rose from the dead in any literal sense. He then asked if there were any questions.

After about 30 seconds, an old, dark skinned preacher with a head of short-cropped, woolly white hair stood up in the back of the auditorium. "*Docta Tillich, I got one question,*" he said as all eyes turned toward him.

He reached into his sack lunch and pulled out an apple and began eating it. "*Docta Tillich... CRUNCH, MUNCH... My question is a simple question*".. CRUNCH, MUNCH... "*Now, I ain't never read them books you read... CRUNCH, MUNCH... and I can't recite the Scriptures in the original Greek... CRUNCH, MUNCH... I don't know nothin' bout Niebuhr and Heidegger... CRUNCH, MUNCH...*" He finished the apple... "*All I wanna know is: This apple I just ate... was it bitter or sweet?*"

Dr. Tillich paused for a moment and answered in exemplary scholarly fashion... "*I cannot possibly answer that question, for I haven't tasted your apple.*"

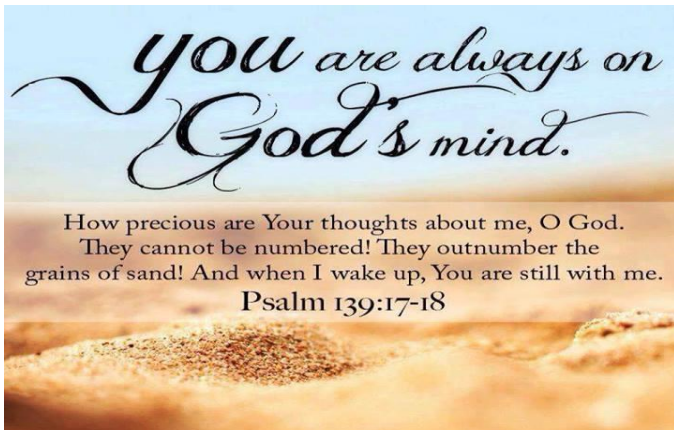
The white-haired preacher dropped the core of his apple into his crumpled paper bag, looked up at Dr. Tillich and said calmly, "*Neither have you tasted my Jesus.*"

The 1,000 plus in attendance could not

contain themselves. The auditorium erupted with applause and cheers.

Dr. Tillich thanked his audience and promptly left the platform.

Have you tasted Jesus?



Cook's Corner:



Haricots Verts and Grape Tomato Salad with Crème Fraîche Dressing

Ingredients:

- 1 pound haricots verts, trimmed
 - 1/4 cup finely chopped fresh basil
 - 2 tablespoons minced shallots
 - 2 tablespoons fresh lemon juice
 - 2 tablespoons crème fraîche
 - 1 tablespoon honey
 - 1/2 teaspoon salt
 - 1 pint grape or cherry tomatoes, halved
 - 1 tablespoon pine nuts, toasted
- Try meal plans from Cooking Light Diet!

Preparation:

Cook haricots verts in boiling water 2 minutes or until crisp-tender. Drain and rinse with cold water; drain.

Combine basil and next 5 ingredients (through salt) in a large bowl, stirring with a whisk. Add haricots verts and tomatoes; toss gently to coat.

Divide mixture evenly among 6 plates; sprinkle with nuts

Guess the Locations:



1.



2.

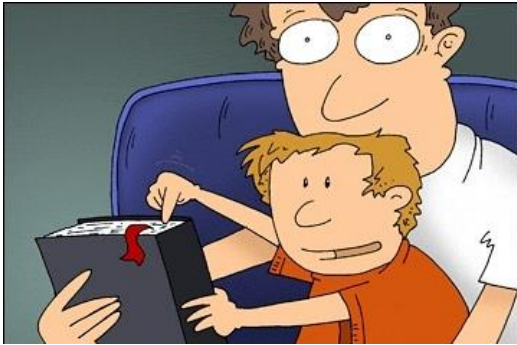
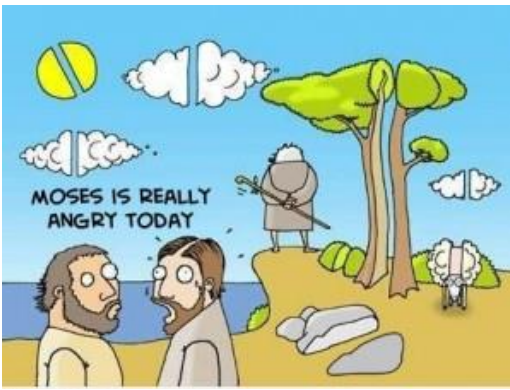


3.

RELIGIOUS JOKES



SOME BISHOPS ATTEMPT TO JOIN THE UNIVERSITY CHRISTIAN UNION DEBATE, BUT FIND THEY HAVE TO SIGN A DOCTRINAL BASIS FIRST



I really like your Bible Dad How do you turn it on?

Can you make room in your heart?



It was a beautiful Sunday morning. People were filling the church to its full capacity! As they entered, each was given a bulletin filled with announcements, topic of today's sermon, what songs they would sing and who to pray for.

At the end of the line stood an older man, with filthy clothes and you could tell that he had not bathed in days. His face was covered with whiskers, for he had not shaved for a very long time. When he reached the steward, he removed his tattered old brown hat in respect. His hair was long, dirty, and a tangled mess. He had no shoes on his feet, and wore only soiled black socks to cover the sores. The Steward looked at him turning up his nose at the old man and said, "Uh, I'm sorry sir, but I'm afraid we can't let you in. You will distract the congregation and we don't allow anyone to disrupt our service. I'm afraid you'll have to leave."

The old man looked down at himself and with a puzzled look on his face he placed his

old brown hat back upon his head and turned to leave. He was sad as he loved to hear the choir sing. He loved to watch the little children get up in front of the church to sing their little songs. He carried in his pocket a small worn out Bible and loved to see if the minister preached a passage from the Bible that he had underlined. But because he wanted to be respectful, and didn't want to cause any commotion, he hung down his head and walked back down the steps of the big brick church.

He sat down on the brick wall near the edge of the church yard and strained to listen through closed doors and windows to the singing going on in the church. Oh how he wished he could be inside with all the others.

A few minutes had passed by when all of a sudden a younger man came up behind him and sat down near him. He asked the old man what he was doing. He answered, "I was going to go to church today, but they thought I was too filthy, my clothes too old and worn, and they were afraid I would disrupt their service.

Sorry, I didn't introduce myself. My name is George." The two men shook hands, and George couldn't help but notice that this man had long hair like his. He wore a piece of cloth draped over his body tied with a sash. He had sandals on his feet, now covered with dust and dirt.

The stranger touched George's shoulder, and said: "George, don't feel too bad because they won't let you in. My name is Jesus, and I've been trying to get into this same church for years -- they won't let me in either."



"If you're ever headed the wrong way in life, remember the road to Heaven allows U-turns."



The Healing Teaching & Chivalric Order of St Raphael