

Homily Notes
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Sunday, September 18, 2011

Self-Interest as a Method of Moral Decision Making

Many people confuse selfishness and self-interest. Selfishness is when there is an excessive or exclusive concern for oneself and the person makes decisions that knowingly burden or harm others for personal gain. This is always a sin and should be avoided at all costs.

However, Self-Interest includes one's own needs as a factor in decision making.

The problem with most people is they don't consider their self-interest properly when determining what actions to take. They have a surge of emotion that influences them and they don't weigh the personal consequences enough. They foolishly take actions that end up harming them more than helping them.

Driving fast may be fun, but spending ten years in jail for vehicular manslaughter will not bring you contentment.

Having marital relations outside of marriage may be fun, but dying of AIDS or getting and STD is not. Did you know that one in four college students have an STD? (See study at bottom of second page)

Bernie Madoff is an example of someone who was foolish and not self-interested. Many people call him "Greedy" but I think he is more foolish than greedy. Many people on Wall Street make tens or hundreds of millions of dollars without being thrown in jail. Had he been truly "greedy" he would have avoided breaking the law and being thrown in jail.

Today I am proposing a type of morality that is totally based on Self-Interest. Most of us are foolish not self-interested. We do things against our own self interest for temporal euphoria and don't strive for eternal goodness (Thomas Aquinas calls it Eudaimonia -which is a lifelong happiness that comes from doing good and avoiding Evil.)

I want you to be SO self-interested that you:

- Love your spouse to the point of self sacrifice because you want to have an awesome and full-filling marriage.
- Love you family more than your job so you can stand in front of God and be proud of how you raised you family and be allowed into heaven.
- Tithe your time, talent and treasure so that God will bless you with happiness and contentment.

- Read Scripture and the Church's teachings so you will know them and be able to love Christ and His teachings so much that you base your life on them and live a happier life.
- Stand up for human life so that your children, grandchildren and great grandchildren grow up in a world that welcomes life so they can be born.
- Avoid sin so you can live with God in His heavenly kingdom forever and not spend eternity in pain and suffering in hell.
- Be faithful to your spouse, family, friends and job because you know that being trustworthy and authentic is one of the most important things in life.
- Avoid Gossip because you know that gossip is of grave matter and ruins reputations and that you know that those who you gossip with are gossiping about you when your not around.
- Share your faith with your co-workers, neighbors and friends because you know that sharing your faith is a way to strengthen your own faith and that sharing eternal truth feels good.
- Work for justice in the world because you know that if the world is unjust for others it could become unjust for you or your children or grandchildren.
- Volunteer and give to the poor because you know how good it feels to help those in need.
- Pray everyday and get closer to God who is Love because you have a yearning for a perfect love that cannot be full-filled by anyone but God.
- Think positively because you know that lighting a match is infinitely better than cursing the darkness.
- Stand up for Christ and His teachings because you know that dying a martyrs death is better than dying a coward and going to hell.

In the end I want you to be so self interested that you live a good, holy and happy life because that is your destiny. It is why you were created and it will be your eternal salvation if you are self-interested enough to do God's will every-time...all the time.

***(A 2004 survey conducted by CDC researcher Dr. Sarah Forhan tested 838 teen girls for four STDs. Of these girls, 18 percent had the Human Papillomavirus, 4 percent had Chlamydia, 2.5 percent has Trichomoniasis and 2 percent had the Herpes Simplex Virus. While some of these STDs are treatable, many are not and will be carried with these young girls and their sexual partners for life. Most, if not all, women in the study were unaware that they had an STD.)

