

# SAID ED January 29, 2012

## Male Spirituality

I've written about this before, but I want to again. I am concerned that there seems to be increasing disrespect for men in our culture. Have you noticed so many commercials of late that seem to have male bashing as their theme? It is really getting to annoy me!

At first I thought it was humorous that the father of the family is depicted as sort of a nice but dull witted fellow as tells his wife that he is going "power wash" the deck. She smiles and he turns on the machine and proceeds to blow over all the furniture and table settings on the deck. Do you know the commercial that I mean? It ends with the man standing there rather befuddled as the wife says rolls her eyes.

Now I am not saying that us guys don't do some dumb things at times, but I'm getting tired of the subtle and the not so subtle ways in which men in our culture are put down. Perhaps this trend is a reaction to the many ways in which men have put women down, but that is no excuse. Two wrongs don't make a right, both are wrong.

I think it's time for men to be a little more assertive about the gentler and more spiritual sides. I'm concerned that somehow spirituality seems to be the province of women; that men are characterized as the strong providers and women as the soul nurturers. This doesn't reflect a balanced view of reality nor the Christian outlook on life.

God calls men and women to live in partnership with each other; to celebrate their relationship in the most intimate way in the Sacrament of Marriage. There is a give and take, a covenanted relationship between men and women in which they compliment each other's strengths and support each other in their limitations.

So much of our advertising on television and in the print media depicts men as slightly dull, overshadowed by their sparkling wives or women partners; in some way lacking. Check it out; make a note of this portrayal of men in our culture. I think it is a darned shame and I wish **we** could address this directly and begin to do something about it. I fear this cultural trend is influencing us in our parish life as well as the rest of our lives. I will say more next week in this column, but for now please think about it.

We need an authentic male spirituality: one that speaks to every man about his daily experience, which quite often involves routine, tedium, and ordinariness. There's a part in every male human being that is rooted in God and that finds in itself the search for the authentic, the adventurous, and the awesome. We need to call this forth from our hearts, guys. We need to recognize it for what it is: a gift from God.

Have a great week!

PS. Next weekend please welcome Fr. Bernard Oshefski of the Cross International Catholic Outreach program. He will be preaching about the charitable works of this worthy organization while I am on vacation.

