

SAID ED February 5, 2012

More on Men's Thirst for God

Last week I wrote about the need for a "Male Spirituality." In our culture today there is a great hunger for a spirituality that builds upon the everyday experiences of men. Men's groups are multiplying as this hunger is being explored. By nature we are builders and doers and providers and protectors. Our culture is witnessing the rise of women entering into areas which we have previously regarded as "men's turf." My problem is not that women are more and more using their gifts to contribute to society as their abilities and interests allow and invite, but rather that men are often put down and demeaned as they try to do the same.

In other cultures the work of ritual and religion is seen as "men's work" more than in ours. I can't tell you how many guys have told me that they leave the "religion and God stuff" to their wives. Men often judge themselves as unable, unworthy, unable and incompetent to share what it means to them to be a spiritual person – that is to say being a fully alive human being. So often men are the ones who bring the family to church, but fall into the background when it comes to speaking about "the Spirit" alive in their hearts. I would like to see that change. Our children deserve better, so do we men.

One of the ways in which we can sign this priority is to have more men visible in our liturgical life. It is not uncommon for the priests and deacons to be surrounded by female servers, female lectors and female Eucharistic Ministers. I wish more husbands and dads would come forward to join the wives and mothers who offer their service at the Altar. Would you please think about this request? Let me know of your willingness and I will help you respond to this important need.

Under the "Did you know this?" topic, I came across some facts and figures in an article written by non-Catholic; Sam Miller - a prominent Cleveland Jewish businessman:

Do you know - the Catholic Church educates 2.6 million students everyday at the cost to that Church of 10 billion dollars, and a savings on the other hand to the American taxpayer of 18 billion dollars. The graduates go on to graduate studies at the rate of 92%.

The Catholic Church has 230 colleges and universities in the U.S. with an enrollment of 700,000 students.

The Catholic Church has a non-profit hospital system of 637 hospitals, which account for hospital treatment of 1 out of every 5 people - not just Catholics - in the United States today.

Sam goes on to extol the merits of our Catholic Church even as we suffer from some bad press occasioned by a few sinful and all too human priests and bishops, but he says very forcefully:

A study of American priests showed that most are happy in the priesthood and find it even better than they had expected, and that most, if given the choice, would choose to be priests again in face of all this obnoxious PR the church has been receiving.

Walk with your shoulders high and your head higher. Be a proud member of the most important non-governmental agency in the United States.

Then remember what Jeremiah said: 'Stand by the roads, and look and ask for the ancient paths, where the good way is and walk in it, and find rest for your souls'. Be proud to speak up for your faith with pride and reverence and learn what your Church does for all other religions.

Be proud that you're a Catholic."

'Nough said! Have a great week!!

