



We Do Not Know What We Do Not Know

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The above is called a truism. This term is very important for every one of us. Our life begins when our mother and father deliver a child alive. That child starts on a journey they call the Mystery of life. It is a mystery because we do not know what is ahead of us. God has given us life and He has placed us in the care of a father and mother who love each other and hopefully will love the child enough to train the child rather than just feed him. We trust they wish to bring him up to be a healthy holy success in this mystery of life. The parents are so important because they are going to be the model and the teachers of the child in both his religious and academic education. The religious education is so important and should be begun early because it will guide the child on the right path. It will harmonize our life because we are both an animal and a spirit. We are one person and therefore everything we do has to accommodate the needs of the body and soul. The parents of course have to know they are responsible for the religious education of their children. However not all parents are automatically filled with the knowledge they need to bring the child up. It may be they have not themselves been brought up to understand that they are responsible for the child's behavior and early education. They could do a great deal of damage. You have all heard of the spoiled brat. Be sure not marry one or your marriage will fail.

The child has to begin early to learn to follow the good example of the parents. Parents often do not realize their children are watching them twenty-four hours a day. By so doing they learn a great deal of their future behaviour from observing their parents. The parents then have to not only to teach what is right they have to behave as one who is trying to be good. We go together through life on our way to eventual death and heaven. We must keep that in mind as we grow and that will help parents to educate their children.

The first great gift from God is Baptism. It is called a sacrament, a sacred sign, a sacred gift and it gives us an electric start, a jolt in our education about God who is so good. We have to learn to know, to love, and to serve God. We must realize that you can not love someone you do not really know. The child needs to be educated according to his or her capacity in the reality of God, Creator, and Redeemer. We have to understand that we need God's help in this life. This pilgrimage of life is at times very difficult and we cannot live it by ourselves. We need the assistance of our loving God.

Not knowing what to do is a common situation. We have to have sources of reference. There are reliable helpers, who will tell us the truth and how not follow false prophets. We have enemies who are called the spirit of the world. That means people who think of this world only. They are totally preoccupied in the material things of this world. These material goods at times are very very attractive and yet they have to be understood as such and we have to seek advice. That is where prayer comes into our life. We have to learn to communicate with God through prayer. We should also remember that communication is a two-way issue. We are not just talking to God but talking with God. Communication requires telling but also listening.

The sad fact of life must be recognized that not everyone understands how to fulfill their role in life as parents. In such cases they should be encouraged to seek qualified assistance. By doing so is not a sign of weakness or stupidity. It shows the parents have the strength, courage and interest to do a good job in the raising of their children. By allowing children to do what they want before they are ready to know the difference is a disservice to the growing children. For example if a parent says "I let my child not go to church on Sunday because he has something he thinks is more important." That indicates the parents have not yet educated him to the point of understanding how important the sacrifice of the Mass is in his life. He does not understand because he has not completely understood the important meaning of our faith. The key focus in our Christian life is the Passion, Death and Resurrection of Jesus who died for all of us. He paid the debt for our sins. Here is a child who in effect says he is not interested. He has to be instructed to realize and appreciate the Sacrifice of the Mass is linked completely with the Passion and Death of Jesus Christ on the cross. That Jesus is present again in the sacrifice of the Mass. The parents also have to understand the importance of meeting Jesus as a person. He is not just a historic figure of the past like Napoleon or Caesar. Jesus is alive. He is alive and with us today. He is the Son of God. He wants to help parents and their children to become good. He is going to help them if you let them know Jesus and personally understand how important He is to them and how much He loves us all. We have to learn to love God and then be willing to serve Him. We have to learn how much Jesus did for us, and will do for us, and be willing to receive Him in Holy Communion for our sake. We need to be fed what He promised to give us, that is His flesh and blood for us to help us get to Heaven. We need that kind of nourishment for our soul just as we need bread and butter for our bodies.

(to be continued)