



MEDITATIVE MUSINGS

Volume II | Issue II | Louisiana State Knights of Columbus Chaplain's Newsletter

The Fraternal Cornerstone

Growing into a deeper men's spirituality and embracing formation to combat the crisis of religious faith in our world is surely a high calling that all members of the Knights of Columbus are called to live out. Bishop Thomas J. Olmsted in his exhortation *Into the Breach* outlines the challenges that men of faith face in the world today. It is a call to battle for men to embrace masculine virtues in a world at crisis. Will you and your council prayerfully examine the enormous breach in the battle line that lies before you? Are you ready for spiritual battle?

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(Feel Free to Read this at Your Council Meetings in the Absence of Your Chaplain!)

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(Read this Gospel for Your Opening or Closing Prayer which is the Basis of the State Chaplain's Message)

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Chaplain's Spiritual Message

Dear Brother Knights:

I've always contemplated having a pet, but because of past experiences, I don't have one. And for good reason! When I was first ordained, I had a cat. I didn't know at the time that I was allergic, but because of my OCD tendencies, I left the cat in the yard. He was always getting into trouble. I almost killed him once for rolling in the mud and then prancing on my newly washed car.

One day when I was outside, I noticed the little boy next door with a shovel filling in a hole in the backyard, and he was crying. I walked up to the fence and said, "What are you doing Jimmy?" He looked at me and said, "Father, it's just not fair. My goldfish died, and I just buried him." I have to tell you I felt sorry for the kid. But as I looked further over the fence, I noticed the kid had dug a bottomless pit in the backyard. I asked him, "Jimmy, that's an awfully large hole for a goldfish isn't it." He patted down the last bit of earth and he looked at me and said, "That's because he's in your cat!"

**“God’s way is fair;
maybe it’s our way
that really isn’t.”**

That's not fair! We've heard that before whether it was when we were children or when we were in school. Sometimes we even hear it as penalty flags fly in football games. That's not fair; it's our battle cry for justice!

Sometimes I think we cry out to God "that's not fair" when something's not going the way we want it in our spiritual journey; sometimes we don't stop complaining until we get an ultimate answer. Might the Scriptures move us from the "that's not fair" mentality to an attitude of sheer obedience toward our Lord and Savior?

This Gospel passage for this reflection is downright confusing. At the beginning of the parable, the owner of the vineyard goes out and hires a few workers and promises them a particular wage. They agree, and they are off to work. We've seen similar circumstances today. After hurricanes, migrant workers stand in lines at the corner of Lowe's and Wal-Mart, waiting for someone to hire them for a fixed amount of money.

He gets his foreman to pay the workers beginning with the most recently hired. Surprisingly, for their little bit of work, they get the amount originally promised to the first group of workers. The guys at the end of the line are shocked to learn that they get the exact same salary. They must have cried out "that's not fair." We've worked harder; we've endured the sweat and the sun. Give us one good reason why we shouldn't get paid more! Sometimes I think it's difficult for us to rely on that ultimate answer to our complaint "that's not fair!" Things ultimately don't always go our way because His way is ultimately totally different. Our God is a God who forgives sinners who repent but punishes those who turn away from virtue. Our God is a God who distributes his love to us equally, no matter if we've been faithful for five years or for fifty years. Yes, God's way is fair; maybe it's our way that really isn't! His call to us is a call to obedient love. What is one good reason that we should have to be equitable to all our brothers and sisters? In the end, it's simple – because he knows us better than we know ourselves, because he can fulfill us and we can't – because ultimately the only thing that silences those cries of "that's not fair" is our YES – our obedience to the one who says so! ~Fr. Jamin

Gospel for Reflection: Matthew 20:1-16



So the **LAST**
will be
FIRST
and the **FIRST**
LAST.

Matthew 20:1-16

Knights' Connection

We live in a time of crisis for religious faith that must be met by men with a heartfelt embrace of masculine virtue. Merely reading *Into the Breach* is not enough. Your council must provide opportunities for men on campus to grow in faith. Encourage friendships with other Catholic men so that students can grow together with Christ. Men in brotherhood with other Catholic men pray more, go to Mass and confession more frequently, and read Scripture more often. Men engaged in faith can then best discern the vocation and God's will for their life. Your council must facilitate this Catholic brotherhood! That's truly fair!

“For the kingdom of heaven is like a master of a house who went out early in the morning to hire laborers for his vineyard. After agreeing with the laborers for a denarius a day, he sent them into his vineyard. And going out about the third hour he saw others standing idle in the marketplace, and to them he said, ‘You go into the vineyard too, and whatever is right I will give you.’ So they went. Going out again about the sixth hour and the ninth hour, he did the same. And when evening came, the owner of the vineyard said to his foreman, ‘Call the laborers and pay them their wages, beginning with the last, up to the first.’ And when those hired about the eleventh hour came, each of them received a denarius. Now when those hired first came, they thought they would receive more, but each of them also received a denarius. And on receiving it they grumbled at the master of the house. But he replied to one of them, ‘Friend, I am doing you no wrong. Did you not agree with me for a denarius? Take what belongs to you and go. Am I not allowed to do what I choose with what belongs to me? So the last will be first, and the first last.’”

In *Gaudete et Exsultate*, Pope Francis notes that “we should not think of the devil as a myth, a representation, a symbol, a figure of speech or an idea. This mistake would lead us to let down our guard, to grow careless and end up more vulnerable.” The Holy Father believes that the devil “poisons us with the venom of hatred, desolation, envy and vice. When we let down our guard, he takes advantage of it to destroy our lives, our families, and our communities.”

We have weapons given by God to go “into the breach.” These include faith-filled prayer, meditation on the Word of God, the celebration of Mass, Eucharistic adoration, sacramental Reconciliation, works of charity, community life, and missionary outreach. How will you and your Council go armed “into the breach?”



READ the Scripture Reading on page three of this newsletter.



SHARE the reflection of the State Chaplain with your Council in the absence of your Chaplain!



REFLECT on how you might put this spiritual message into practice in your Council.