

FROM THE PASTOR'S DESK

Dear Parishioners:

You may have gathered by the green vestments in church that we have changed seasons. After four months of the Lent & Easter Seasons plus some additional feasts, the liturgical season is now Ordinary Time again. Special seasons and celebrations add zest to life but most of our days pass in ordinary time. In just the same way, there are special times when our faithfulness to Christ requires exceptional courage by we usually grow in holiness through steady, daily perseverance. Recently I have been reading a book on the spiritual life which offers principles for growing in virtue by exercising our will in cooperation with the Lord's grace. The book, *How to Live Nobly and Well: Timeless Principles for Achieving True Success and Lasting Happiness* was written by Fr. Edward Garesche, S.J., and I would like to share some passages with you as space allows.

Recognize Daily Opportunities For Success

As you stand on the threshold of the future, what is before you? You are an unknown quantity even to yourself. Your coming days are like a blank check in which you must fill the significant figures. They are like an empty page on which you must write the record of nobleness or ignominy or mere dull mediocrity. You have within you the stuff of heroes, and you have also within you instincts and tendencies that, yielded to, will make you a degraded criminal. You feel the pull of opposite tendencies: now you dream of great things; now you are tugged downward by impulses of which you are ashamed.

But you are the captain of your own soul; you are the arbiter of your own destiny. God and man both give you a fair chance, a noble opportunity. God has endowed you with a free will, the divine prerogative of choosing between good and evil. He has given you a body and a soul, both excellent and beneficial, the climax of His visible creation. He has brought you into being, without a past, but with a splendid future, if you seize it by your free and virtuous effort.

At the same time, you cannot be really free without having the choice between good and evil, and if you deliberately choose what is evil and base, you may have it and, with it, the dark consequence of a ruined life, lost opportunities, and dismal failure. You have everything that you need from God to become a noble person, upright, Godfearing, respected, and successful, in the right meaning of "success".

True, the world is full of temptations and opportunities for evil, as it always was, but it is full of far greater opportunities, far more multiplied chances, for good. If you choose to invest your life as you should, you have a field of sublime excellence for that investment...

Even those who have lost the opportunities of youth and have hitherto made failures of their lives, may, at any moment, begin to struggle upward. They may recapture by courage and resolve, the first glow of youthful virtue.

Success in life rests on definite principles and depends on each man's free choice. According to those principles, it can be surely gained or surely lost, according to the workings of the great laws of human nature. Choose rightly, and you will make a success of life.

Strive For Lasting Success

Before we speak of the means to achieve success, we should form a clear idea for ourselves as to what success means, in what it consists, for we cannot discuss the way sensibly unless we know where we are going. Everyone who is not a fool desires success in life, but many fail to achieve it, even with their utmost effort, because they have not rightly conceived what really constitutes success.

A successful life is a life that achieves its purpose. Such a life is a happy one, even though its way may pass through suffering and difficulty, because happiness is one thing and pleasure another, and a person may have great pleasure and still be very unhappy just as he may lack pleasure almost entirely and still be very happy.

With my prayers,

Fr. Conley