

Spiritually Speaking

The painful responsibilities of love

By Fr. Thankachan Joseph SDB, St. Patrick Church

We share a tendency to think that we are only responsible for our own actions and behavior and that we have no responsibility for the actions of others around us. But what we reflect on today is the obligation of faithful co-members of a community to get back ones who go astray. This is especially so in matters of justice and morality; we cannot avoid our responsibility. If we are believers, we have a responsibility to God for others. We tend to excuse ourselves from this onerous task by giving all kinds of excuses: “Why not live and let live?” or “If I point out her mistake, she will get angry and reject me,” or “Do I really have to say what’s on my mind? Why rock the boat?” To approach this painful duty of fraternal correction entails many qualities: courage, compassion, patience, gentleness, humility, sincerity, reverence, a desire to preserve the other’s good name, prudence, delicacy, tact, mutual dialogue, true listening and mercy.” - Harold Buetow.

The first reading, from the prophet Ezekiel (chapter 33:7-9), is all about the personal responsibility of the city guardian. The reading refers to a primitive kind of policing, the watchman who stood on the Palestinian hills and blew his trumpet to warn of invaders. The prophet speaks about the pros and cons of taking watch of the city; any failure on the part of the watchman would often result in death, either death for many or all the members of his city, or his own death because if he failed to do his job he would be executed, as liable for the lives of the people. Prophets like Ezekiel saw themselves as watchmen over the spiritual dangers that threatened God’s people. The prime qualities expected of a watchman were a meaningful presence to others, alertness to possible dangers, and personal responsibility to sound a warning on time, irrespective of whether people heeded it or not. If a sentry fails to warn, he bears grave responsibility for other people. In our role as lookouts, regardless of how well or ill others receive our message, we, like Ezekiel, keep our integrity by speaking out.

The central theme of the second reading is Love. St. Paul’s Letter to the Romans (chapter 13:8-10) goes like this: “Owe nothing to anyone, except to love one another.” Saint Paul defines love in his first letter to the Corinthians (13:4) as follows: “Love is always patient and kind; love is never jealous; love is not boastful or conceited.” Paul points out that the underlying reason for our responsibility towards others should be love. Obligation ceases to be an issue when there is fullness of love. Love does not only require doing nice things towards others, it also means tough love that is seen especially in fraternal correction. Paul believes that people who honestly do everything motivated by love will find all else falling into place.

In the Gospel of St. Matthew (18:15-20), Jesus’s teaching deals with the relationship of members in the kingdom of God. He addresses a common occurrence in the Christian community: a dispute between two members of the Church. Jesus outlines practical tips for settling

such issues impartially. The victim should privately address the offender and attempt to resolve the disagreement without outside involvement. If that fails, the victim should bring two or three witnesses and confront the offender again. If the dispute is still unresolved, the matter should be brought to the attention of the entire community. If the offender refuses to adhere to the recompenses prescribed by the community of believers, Jesus suggests that the delinquent may be excluded from the Church. The key point in this passage we need to notice is that Jesus does not discourage disagreement within the community of believers of the Church;

He acknowledges the reality of conflict and error and offers His disciples a means for addressing such matters. It is in the conclusion to this teaching that the message of hope is found: If decisions are taken in prayer, then the community can be assured of God’s assistance.

Two aspects of Jesus’s teaching here are outstanding: He has standards and he wisely makes headway. The first step is to go to the offender and speak directly to the person rather than to anyone else. “If your brother does something wrong, go and have it out with him alone, between your two selves.” (18:15). So often everyone gets to hear about the problem except the person concerned. Gossip can destroy relationships and a person’s good name. Christians are called to deal with one another honestly and personally – no anonymous complaints to authorities, no whisper campaigns. The Gospel says that the offended party, not the offending one, should first seek compromise. If the first step does not work, the second step is to bring one or two others along with you, not for the purpose of proving the other person wrong, but to help in the process of settlement. Only if that does not work, you proceed to the third step, which is to refer it to the local community of faith, the Church. The whole process should be inspired by a spirit of forgiveness and not to attest who is right and who is wrong.

If all of these fail, there is always something we can do individually and in common - a short prayer for each other. United prayer is more powerful, sensible, and effective than resentment in our responsibility towards one another. “I tell you solemnly, if two of you on earth agree to ask anything at all, it will be granted to you by my Father in heaven. For where two or three meets in my name, I shall be there with them.” Is Jesus playing the numbers game with us? Using two or more adds pressure on God to answer our prayer? Obviously not, Jesus is using numbers to impress upon us the importance of praying with others, as opposed to praying by ourselves. When we pray with others, he will be present to us. God’s presence is felt in our midst and his power becomes operative in us. What we cannot do alone, we can do in terms of correction and forgiveness, healing and service, when He is with us. May we find the strength to speak up when needed.



Fr. Thankachan Joseph

A View from the Hill

By Doris Brosnan

A few months ago, Joe Gifford, son-in-law of Ernie and Mary Jean McCabe, who were living at Willow Creek Terrace, posted signs in the back yard reminiscent of the Burma-Shave signs familiar to all the residents. Pertinent to the Covid-19 pandemic, but with a sense of humor, the signs continue to bring welcoming smiles during this serious crisis. Burma-Shave was an American brand of brushless shaving cream famous for its advertising gimmick of posting sequential highway roadside signs for advertising. They appeared from 1926 to 1963 and in 1929, became humorous rhyming poems. An example of six sequential signs that piqued the travelers’ curiosity and sense of humor as they covered the miles between each additional sign: “Every shaver / Now can snore / Six more minutes / Than before / By using / Burma-Shave.” Visitors are welcome to walk around to the back for a look at the signs. (Might stimulate one’s own rhyming-signs ideas.)

Administrator George Nairns adamantly announces that the signs at the front of the Terrace state a fact. She continues to commend the staff for their devotion to the residents, their observance of all safety rules at the Terrace, and their caution when not at work to avoid any potential health threat.

But staff involvement is not all work and no play, as was obvious during what is normally fair week in Morrow County. They had helped residents complete their projects intended for

entry in the fair, the horse-shoe-based door decorations still brightening the halls and the bird-themed quilt that still delights from the wall in the dining room. Everyone also kept in mind their usual Wednesday treat at the fair, the Tillamook ice cream social. A past rodeo-fair royal who wishes to remain anonymous treated everyone to Tillamook “MalTED Moo” (as in cow?) ice cream.

Nairns pointed out that sponsorship and funding of the Port of Morrow’s “School-to-Work” program, administered by Kallie Davis, enabled the staff to devote more time for such projects. And she is pleased to report that two students involved in that program have become Terrace employees. She also is pleased to report that the newest member of the staff is Tiffany Aker, who is interested in pursuing a medical career and is outstanding in her work with the residents and fellow staff members.

Another pleasurable activity at the Terrace is the preparation for birthdays, and on Friday, September 4, an especially impressive birthday will be celebrated: Bonnie Gates will celebrate her 100th birthday with all the fanfare it deserves. Readers are encouraged to send Bonnie birthday cards to 400 Frank Gilliam Drive, and to join the drive-by parade, from 4:30 to 5:30, as Bonnie sits outside or at her window to appreciate the honoring of her special day. Bonnie’s window will be decorated for easy identification for people who come to wish her a “happy birthday.”



Signs resembling Burma-Shave advertisements were posted at Willow Creek Terrace.

On the following Saturday, the 12th, the staff and residents will get to celebrate another birthday, as Rita Dezoete has them join her for a special birthday lunch. And family and friends will be welcome to help her celebrate with visits that follow the COVID-19 guidelines.

Weekly activities led by staff members continue, as do the morning discussions, and this coming month pro-

vides several special-day opportunities for lively and/or memory-filled chats: Newspaper Carriers (private contractors still not yet just a memory) – 9/4; Waffles (1869?) – 9/6; Labor Day – 9/7; Sewing Machine (1790, home-use 1800’s) – 9/10; Grandparents – 9/13; Golden Girls (35 years ago) – 9/14; Guacamole (popularized in USA in 1990’s) – 9/16; Constitution – 9/17; Cheese Burgers (1926) –

Port of Morrow plans changes at Boardman golf course



The Port of Morrow plans to rename the Willow Run Golf Course to Marker 40 Golf Club.

By Andrew Sykes

The Port of Morrow announced a name change to the recently purchased Willow Run Golf Course in Boardman. Beginning in September, the executive golf course will now be known as the Marker 40 Golf Club. The new name is taken from the mile marker 40 sign located on the Columbia River at Boardman.

“I’m excited to see an establishment that’s been in Boardman for so many years receive a new brand,” says Torrie Griggs, executive director of the Boardman Chamber of Commerce. “The golf course will continue to grow and thrive alongside our developing community. It is a great recreational opportunity for both residents and visitors to Boardman.”

“The Port of Morrow

has engaged in conversations over the years about the benefits of a new golf course in Boardman. The chance to purchase Willow Run Golf Course was the perfect opportunity to continue the legacy and vision of Dallas Wilson and to maintain this facility as a recreational asset for our community and region,” says Port of Morrow Economic Development Director Lisa Mittelsdorf.

The Willow Run Golf Course opened in 1972 as Wilson’s River Run by Dallas Wilson. Rod and Kenna Punches purchased the golf course from Wilson in 2004 and continued to maintain and operate the public course. The Port of Morrow, on June 24, voted unanimously to purchase the 19-acre course for \$500,000.



Administrator Nairns agrees that the staff at the Terrace are heroes as depicted by the sign at the front.

9/18; Centenarians – 9/22, which is also the first day of Autumn; One-Hit Wonders – 9/25 (can anyone name those tunes/singers?); Hunting and Fishing – 9/26; First Responders – 9/27; and Jerry Lee Lewis (85 years old) – 9/29.

September 13 begins “Assisted-Living Week,” recognizing the evolution of the facilities since the 1980’s, and the week ends with “Locate an Old Friend Day,” on which the staff will assist any resident who wishes to search for and reach out to someone with whom contact has been lost. The next week, beginning

on the 20th, focus during exercises in the morning will include some Tai Chi movements intended to improve balance, since it is recognized as “Balance Awareness Week.” Residents and staff at Willow Creek Terrace recognize the importance of the physical and mental stimulation from the variety of activities offered each day – from birthday celebrations, to discussions, to exercising, to sharing meals with friends, to playing games, to relaxing with favorite TV shows... all are viewed as critical to life on the Hill.

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