

Day 197 – Saturday, October 3 - Bear Wrongs Patiently

A good friend of mine was robbed yesterday. Like most people he was extremely upset. How are we to react to such injustices. Just as violence begets violence, anger begets anger. Only Peace will beget peace. Perhaps it is time to remind oje of the Spiritual works of mercy.

The works of mercy are broken up into two categories: the corporal works of mercy and the spiritual works of mercy. The spiritual works of mercy are designed to meet the spiritual needs of others: Instruct The Ignorant, Counsel The Doubtful, Admonish The Sinner, Bear Wrongs Patiently, Forgive Offences Willingly, Comfort The Afflicted, Pray For The Living and The Dead.

Bear Wrongs Patiently

THE STATE OF YOUR SOUL

There is no clearer window into the state of your soul than an encounter with unnecessary and undeserved suffering. It is in the truly difficult moments that depth of character is revealed. When an injustice occurs in our lives, it can be so easy to let frustration determine our action and retribution become our final goal. It's even considered by most to be the sensible and understandable reaction to injustice. But anyone who has let vengeance carry the day can tell you that it is destructive for everyone involved.

GOD'S PLAN

What is it about God that makes him so patient? How is he able to be so persistent in his mercy despite the fact that we seem to be constantly coming up short of the person he created me to be? I believe part of the reason is that God is in the business of transforming not changing. God did not make a mistake when he created us. He didn't fail you or the world around you. He made you exactly who you were meant to be.

In other words, God did not create you in the hopes of completely changing who you are at some point in your life. He didn't say, "Whoops, looks like I messed up a little here! Oh well, I will fix that later . . ." God does not make mistakes. But God does break into the fabric of our daily lives to transform us from the inside out. Not because we need fixing, but because he desires for us to be fully alive! As Saint Irenaeus once said, "The Glory of God is man fully alive." And, the only way to be fully alive is to become perfectly yourself. God wants to take all that you are—all of your strengths and weaknesses—and transform you into the person you were meant to be. Getting there is a journey. And that journey requires an abundance of patience on God's part.

BEAR WRONGS PATIENTLY

To accomplish this mission, God asks us to join him, not in an effort to change our fellow brothers and sisters, but to journey with them on their path of transformation. While it can be incredibly painful, the opportunity to bear wrongs patiently holds within it the power to transform your life and the life of the person who wronged you. When we come from a place driven by patience and not vengeance, we are able to accept, understand, and enter into God's work of transformation. In the end, because of free will, you have a choice. Will being wronged be an occasion for division, anger, and violence? Or will it be an occasion for unity, patience, and transformation? You decide.

In the light of eternity, we're here for a very short time, really. We're here for one thing, ultimately: to learn how to love, because God is love. - James Finley

Sincerely,
Fr. Jim Kaptein