

For Christ's Sake – Push the Button!



I pushed the button and nothing happened.

I pushed it again....and again....I pushed it in rapid succession hoping my energy and enthusiasm would override whatever was keeping it from working! Nothing changed. I looked down at the little instrument in my hand, it was called a “Genie.” It had worked only a few minutes earlier!

I had raised the door and lowered it again, and here I was outside trying to raise the door again. But, nothing doing! I was sitting in the driveway of Fr. Noonan’s house when all of this happened. Some “Genie” I thought to myself. I banged it a few times with my hand hoping this would bring about the desired result and open the door — it didn’t happen!

*At last, I was forced to surrender to the truth that I already knew — **“No point in pushing the button if the battery is dead.”** I took out the battery, warmed it with my hands, put it back in place, and — Voila! It worked!*

*The battery needed replacing. It had done its job. It had served well. Now, it was time to replace it. Wow! What a teachable moment! I now realized the lesson the Lord was teaching me. We have too many people pushing the button but the battery is dead, so consequently there is nothing happening. **Why not change the battery?***

*In our Catholic Tradition, we have many people pushing the button and hoping some magical or “Genie” relationship will come about with Jesus Christ. Well, it ain’t happening! Perhaps the reason is simple — **we need to change the battery!***

So many of us Catholics, as Christians, have a very naive notion of God. That image of God is usually a human image. It might be the image of the finest, most kind, most generous, most loving person I have ever met in my whole life. But, it is still merely a shadow of my God!

It may be an image of God as a Judge — one who is watching me very carefully from afar; one who knows my every thought, word, deed, and manages my inventory. It is as if He keeps score of my good deeds and bad, alike!

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Perhaps I need to change the battery — the Power Source — before I keep pushing the button. Changing a battery is ordinarily not a monumental challenge. Changing the battery of my Spiritual Life can really be as simple as letting go. For some, it is an easy process. For others, that may be a huge effort. I guess to some extent it depends on how much I am vested in that old battery — that old way!

If I am really attached to things, practices, devotions, and precepts, and I feel these are going to get me into the Kingdom then I may have great difficulty letting go. If I am attached to my image of God as Judge, or if I think of Jesus Christ as my prosecuting attorney, then I am likely to have great difficulty changing the battery. The reason is pretty simple — it has become more about me, what I do, and how I do it.

I have become exhausted on this journey. We have too many exhausted Christians. But, the truth is, it's not about me. It's about Him, and what He desires to do in me, through me and with me! It is not so much about what I do, but what He is doing!

Let's not just keep doing what we are doing! Let's stop! Change the battery, then Push the Button! Take time to reflect on these beautiful words as you think about changing the battery:

“The Lord takes delight in His people.” Psalm 149

This reflection from *The Word Among Us* is such a door-opener:

“Lord, I am overwhelmed by these words. I know that You made me. I can even accept that You love me because You love everything You made. But to hear that You take delight in me? That's more than I ever expected! It's such a personal claim: You look into my eyes — into my heart — and You delight in what You see. You look past my sins. You look beyond my fears and anxieties. You see the goodness that You have placed in me. You see my desire to do the right thing. You see the love in my heart, even when I cannot see it. And all of this brings You great joy.”



Join me for Part 2 next week!

Fr. Gerry

October 1, 2017 26th Sunday in Ordinary Time Respect Life Sunday

~ see the Monitors and our Website for announcements ~

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