



Daily Reflections

September 30, 2018

Scripture

Mark 9: 38-48

At that time, John said to Jesus,

"Teacher, we saw someone driving out demons in your name, and we tried to prevent him because he does not follow us."

Jesus replied, "Do not prevent him.

There is no one who performs a mighty deed in my name who can at the same time speak ill of me.

For whoever is not against us is for us.

Anyone who gives you a cup of water to drink because you belong to Christ,

amen, I say to you, will surely not lose his reward.

"Whoever causes one of these little ones who believe in me to sin, it would be better for him if a great millstone

were put around his neck

and he were thrown into the sea.

If your hand causes you to sin, cut it off.

It is better for you to enter into life maimed than with two hands to go into Gehenna, into the unquenchable fire.

And if your foot causes you to sin, cut it off.

It is better for you to enter into life crippled than with two feet to be thrown into Gehenna. And if your eye causes you to sin, pluck it out.

Better for you to enter into the kingdom of God with one eye than with two eyes to be thrown into Gehenna, where 'their worm does not die, and the fire is not quenched.'"

Our Scripture Reflection

The deadly warning given by Our Lord is meant for all religious leaders, teachers, and people who have influence over the His "little ones." And who are these little ones? He is referring to children and those who are new to or weak in their faith. To cause scandal means to be a stumbling block to someone's faith, therefore, provoking them to hopelessness and sin. Beware, says Jesus because the culprit faces severe punishment.

Food for your Journey

The corruption of Judge Mark Ciavarella was nothing short of astonishing. For years, he and a fellow judge, Michael Conahan, had been sentencing juveniles to extended stays in the Luzerne County, Pennsylvania, juvenile detention center for crimes as minor as mocking a school principal, trespassing in a vacant building or shoplifting DVDs.

For each teenager these corrupt judges locked up, the for-profit company that ran the detention center paid them a kickback. It was well worth it to the company: the county paid them according to how many beds were filled. In what came to be known as the "Kids for Cash" scandal, everybody prospered, both the judges and the prison contractor. Everybody, that is, except the taxpayers of Luzerne County and the youths whose lives were ruined.

Justice finally caught up with Judge Ciaverella. In 2008, he was found guilty of fraud, racketeering, tax evasion and other offenses and sentenced to 28 years in federal prison. Judge Conahan was sentenced to 17.5 years.

You can almost hear these corrupt judges in their courtrooms prior to their arrest, muttering to themselves: "What is truth?"

--"Mark Ciavarella," Wikipedia.com. Retrieved June 1, 2015.

A Prayer from the Heart

Lord Jesus, You are the Good and Holy Shepherd. Watch over and protect the "little ones" in our world, those who are so close to Your heart. Help me to serve You and them, Lord, as a model of true faith. Amen