



[Jesus said,] "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." MARK 9:43

SHUTTERSTOCK

Isn't That a Bit Extreme?

No sacrifice is too extreme in pursuit of a dream. We will forego sleep, the enjoyment of a favorite pastime, the company of good friends—even the pleasure of good food. Ask anyone who has spent hours preparing for a recital, trying out for a position on an athletic team, or studying for an entrance exam. The same is true when one's livelihood is involved. Ask farmers, people in the military, teachers, or health-care workers. Ask new parents, or even those who have been at it for a long time. If we really value something or someone, no sacrifice is too great—at least for a while—when that cherished goal is in view.

We don't seem as willing to forfeit comfort when negative inclinations are involved, and we all have them: rivalry, jealousy, fury, selfishness, slander,

gossip, conceit, to name a few. We know that such pettiness or rank cruelty can harm us as well as those we offend, but too often we seem unwilling to restrain such inclinations.

In today's Gospel passage, Jesus speaks quite strongly to such reticence. Does he really expect us to maim ourselves? Isn't that a bit extreme? The fact is, when we try to purge ourselves of reprehensible behavior it is like cutting off our hand or plucking out our eye. Ask anyone who deals with an addiction. If Jesus asks this of us, it means that we certainly have the strength to do it.

Sr. Dianne Bergant, CSA

FOR *Reflection*

- ★ *Pray for the insight to recognize a bad habit that keeps you from being your best self.*
- ★ *What behavior might you have to give up?*

Dear Padre,

Isn't evangelization a role best left to religious professionals? I worry about being ridiculed if I try to spread the Good News. Any suggestions?

Many Catholics incorrectly assume that evangelization is not their job but a task for priests, deacons, or others serving in an official capacity. But it is helpful to remember that evangelization is more a matter of commitment rather than a specialized competence. The Gospel proclaims that a disciple must go out into the world and spread the Good News.

Evangelization is the mission and purpose of the whole Church. It is doing God's will and work on earth.

Your anxiety about being ridiculed may arise from a notion that others will reject information about Jesus Christ. This fear may be underestimating the powerful attraction of the Good News. This worry may be based on your own lack of confidence rather than the response of others. There are several ways for dealing

with this concern: First, acknowledge this fear and seek counsel and advice from someone who has overcome it. Second, remember that to help us offset these negative emotions we are all given the fruits of the Holy Spirit: joy, love, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. Third, remember the future—God works in mysterious ways, and grace, though powerful, may take a long time to come to fruition.

The Redemptorists / Sundaybulletin@Liguori.org

Do you have a question for the Padre?

Go to DearPadre.org to send your question and to learn more about *Dear Padre*.



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A WORD FROM *Pope Francis*

It is our great responsibility, as baptized persons, to proclaim Christ, to carry the Church—this fruitful motherhood of the Church—forward. Mary, during the persecution of the first Christians, prayed so much and moved those who had been baptized to go forward with courage.

HOMILY, APRIL 17, 2013

Calendar

Monday

SEPTEMBER 27
St. Vincent de Paul,
Priest
Zec 8:1–8
Lk 9:46–50

Tuesday

SEPTEMBER 28
Weekday
Zec 8:20–23
Lk 9:51–56

Wednesday

SEPTEMBER 29
Sts. Michael, Gabriel,
and Raphael,
Archangels
Dn 7:9–10, 13–14 or
Rv 12:7–12a
Jn 1:47–51

Thursday

SEPTEMBER 30
St. Jerome,
Priest and Doctor
of the Church
Neh 8:1–4a, 5–6, 7b–12
Lk 10:1–12

Friday

OCTOBER 1
St. Thérèse of the Child
Jesus, Virgin and Doctor
of the Church
Bar 1:15–22
Lk 10:13–16

Saturday

OCTOBER 2
The Holy Guardian Angels
Bar 4:5–12, 27–29
Mt 18:1–5, 10

Sunday

OCTOBER 3
Twenty-seventh Sunday
in Ordinary Time
Gn 2:18–24
Heb 2:9–11
Mk 10:2–16 or 10:2–12