

May 24-25, 2014

Thoughts from the pastor,

Last week I ended my letter by mentioning that our relationship with God is more difficult than a marriage relationship. Some people believe it is easier than loving people. In the 1st Letter of St. John he says: "If anyone says, "I love God," but hates his brother, he is a liar; for whoever does not love a brother whom he has seen cannot love God whom he has not seen." But first let me mention one of the difficulties involved with a husband and wife. Most husbands tell me that they don't understand their wives. Most wives will tell me all about their husbands as if they do understand them perfectly; it is just that they want to change them. Since I know many of those husbands in question, I know that the wife does not understand their husband, which is why they are angry with him so much.

It is simple. Men are fairly simple in their way of thinking about things. Women are very complex in their approach to things. It has to do with the wiring of the brain which I have mentioned before. Guy's brains have a series of boxes that they wander around in. Women have brains that are more like bird's nests in which everything is connected so one thought lead to another and then another, etc. Guys have a thought and then move on. Husbands can't track the bird's nest way of thinking and gals can't even believe that guys can even have boxes, especially empty ones. It is the attempts to understand each other and work with the other person as they are that is one of the truest signs of love.

When working with God we must realize that He has an intellect but not a brain, so boxes and bird nests don't apply. "For my thoughts are not your thoughts, nor are your ways my ways, says the Lord. As high as the heavens are above the earth, so high are my ways above your ways and my thoughts above your thoughts." (Is. 55:8-9) Like husbands and wives God has tried to reveal Himself to us so that we can love Him but there are limits, our brain capacity and our limited experience. The more a husband and wife live with each other the better they should be able to understand them. That is the hope but it depends on the effort put forward. If the effort is just a matter of trying to make them into your own image it will fail. A woman cannot make a man think like a woman or vice-versa.

When dealing with God we tend to put our effort into making Him think like we do. We want Him to do what we want Him to do and when we want Him to do it. We don't want to understand why He might be acting in the way He does. We just want our way. I am sure that this is part of Jesus' message when He taught us how to pray. We aren't supposed to say, "My kingdom come, my will be done." It is "Thy kingdom come...."

The Easter message is an example of this. We like the part of the message that lets us know that we will live forever with Him in heaven. We don't like the part about dying first. "Why did this person have to die?" "Why did you take my grandmother from me?" I hear these all the time and I do understand the emptiness that makes us question in this way. But God wants us to try to understand His point of view. He wants to get us to heaven and for Him death is not the end for us anymore than it was for His Son.

As we celebrate this Memorial Day we need to try and show our love of God by trying to understand Him better in this one area at least. He has given us a great gift by inviting us to be a part of His eternal life. As mortal creatures this is amazing. But it means that we must follow His teachings so we can be ready for life in heaven. The hardest part of that lesson is to be willing to let go of this world and let our loved ones let go. Then we can focus on being with each other and God in the next life. The second hardest lesson seems to be letting go of the activities of this world so we can focus on that preparation.

God bless you,
Fr. Frank