

Dec. 6-7, 2014

Thoughts from the pastor,

A few of you are familiar with Flip Wilson's routine as "Geraldine." Her favorite line was "The devil made me do it." I usually think of that when I am reading or hearing the story of Adam and Eve. God to Adam: Why did you do it? Adam to God: Eve made me do it? God to Eve: Why did you do it? Eve to Adam: The devil made me do it. It is an interesting excuse but it doesn't cut it with God. He still threw them out of paradise. It doesn't work for us either. The devil can tempt us but we still have free will. It may be hard to say no to the devil because he puts all sorts of negative or even positive incentives in front of us, but it is still possible.

The negative things he puts in front of us are things that remind us of our fear of death or cause suffering. The positive ones are when he makes it look good but we know we may lose our connection with God. Many of our sexual sins are in this last category.

I received a fax today that fits the first category. It was from Fr. Frank Pavone from Priests for Life. On Nov. 14, 2014, the U.S. Court of Appeals for the D.C. Circuit, ruled against Priests for Life's challenge to the HHS mandate in the case *Priests or Life et al. vs. US Dept. of HHS et al.* The case also includes as plaintiffs the Archdiocese of Washington, D.C., The Catholic University of America, Thomas Aquinas College, and several other entities.

The problem at issue in this case is that the mechanism the government has provided for them to opt out is, in itself, objectionable to our religious and moral convictions. My personal summary of this is the simple statement that artificial methods for keeping women from getting pregnant are not a health issue. It is an option that Catholics should understand is immoral. It is no more a health issue than buying tires is a health issue. Yes I understand that if I have a car I must have tires or I will be an unsafe driver and I will then be unhealthy, but I don't have to have a car. It is not a necessary right. It is something that I wish to have. The government should not mandate that you pay for my tires. If I as a priest decide that I want to be having sex with all the females in the parish and don't want to have them all having babies, you shouldn't be forced to purchase artificial contraception, abortive or not, to keep me from impregnating all the fertile females in the parish. It would be better if you stopped me from fulfilling that plan. The Archbishop would be a good avenue for you to help with that effort. I'm sure he wouldn't be happy with it.

The problem is that the government is now forcing people to pay for other people's immoral and elective behavior. The devil is not making them do it. But right now the devil is tempting the government to make us do it. There are more civil things that need to be done to change this government policy, but we also need to stop the devil. That takes prayer. That is why we are having a National Night of Prayer this Monday night from 8pm to midnight. You are encouraged to join in on one of those hours of prayer before the Blessed Sacrament to ask Mary, the Immaculate Conception, to help us in our battle against Satan, to stop all of this movement along the path of immorality that too many people in our country have been promoting, with the backing of the devil. Satan hates our prayer. Let's drive him crazy.

God bless you all,
Fr. Frank