

RESPECT LIFE HOLY HOUR REFLECTION FOR FEBRUARY: CHOICES HAVE CONSEQUENCES - “Am I My Brother’s Keeper?”

In January we reflected on Adam and Eve’s original sin, a sin which stemmed from their decision to trust a stranger who slithered into their garden one day and told them that the God who loved them into existence was a liar and not to be trusted. (*Genesis 3:3-5*) Why would they believe such a lie? Were they jealous of such a God? Envious? Was it because they wanted to become the architects of their own reality, not “just” stewards of God’s reality? It struck me today! Wasn’t choosing to turn their gaze away from God and onto themselves a form of Death?? For, by doing so, didn’t they separate themselves from the very source of their being? their life?

But that is not the whole of it!!! There was another terrible consequence of Adam and Eve’s decision to turn their gaze away from God and onto themselves. Doing so resulted in their separating themselves from one another. Think of it! After turning away from God, Adam and Eve saw not only their individual nakedness, but also the nakedness of the other. They felt both inward shame and outward bitterness and anger, blaming the other AND GOD for their choices! (*Genesis 3:7-12*)

Throughout the Old Testament, we see examples of this dysfunctional break from the God-centered reality for which we were created. One of the most dramatic examples is Cain’s angry and jealous murder of his brother, Abel, and his bitter rebuttal to God, “Am I my brother’s keeper?” Like Adam and Eve, Cain too denied responsibility for his choices. (*Genesis 4:1-9*)

Finally, don’t we have signs of this same dysfunctional worldview today, especially in our attitudes toward the human person? For those of you old enough, do you remember the famous Frank Sinatra song, “*I’ll do it my way!*”? Or more recently the declaration, “*My Body, My Choice!*” Isn’t the assisted suicide movement and the transgender movement another version of “*My Body, My Choice*”? Isn’t human trafficking a defiant rejection of the dignity of the human person and the God-centered reality for which we were created? And isn’t the restoration of such a reality and existence the purpose of Lent?

St. John Paul II pray for us!

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