



Of Seeds and Flowers



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“AND THE TRUTH SHALL...” A GREEK FOLKTALE

As this folktale from Greece points out, the virtuous soul not only loves truth for its own sake, it loathes the actions of falsehood. Deceit is far more painful for that soul than bearing the hardships that sometimes accompany honesty.

Once upon a time Truth and Falsehood met each other on the road. "Good afternoon," said Truth. "Good afternoon," returned Falsehood. "And how are you doing these days?" "Not very well at all, I'm afraid," sighed Truth. "The times are tough for a fellow like me, you know." "Yes, I can see that," said Falsehood, glancing up and down at Truth's ragged clothes. "You look like you haven't had a bite to eat in quite some time."

"To be honest, I haven't," admitted Truth. "No one seems to want to employ me nowadays. Wherever I go, most people ignore me or mock me. It's getting discouraging, I can tell you. I'm beginning to ask myself why I put up with it."

"And why the devil do you? Come with me, and I'll show you how to get along. There's no reason in the world why you can't stuff yourself with as much as you want to eat, like me, and dress in the finest clothes, like me. But you must promise not to say a word against me while we're together." So Truth promised and agreed to go along with Falsehood for a while, not because he liked his company so much, but because he was so hungry he thought he'd faint soon if he didn't get something into his stomach.

They walked down the road until they came to a city, and Falsehood at once led the way to the very best table at the very best restaurant. "Waiter, bring us your choicest meats, your sweetest sweets, your finest wine!" he called, and they ate and drank all afternoon. At last, when they could hold no more, Falsehood began banging his fist on the table and calling for the manager, who came running at once.

**"O, what a web we weave
when, at first, we practice
to deceive."**



What the devil kind of place is this?" Falsehood snapped. "I gave that waiter a gold piece nearly an hour ago, and he still hasn't brought our change." The manager summoned the waiter, who said he'd never even seen a penny out of the gentleman. "What?" Falsehood shouted, so that everyone in the place turned and looked. "I can't believe this place! Innocent, law-abiding citizens come in to eat, and you rob them of their hard-earned money! You're a pack of thieves and liars! You may have fooled me once, but you'll never see me again! Here!" He threw a gold piece at the manager. "Now this time bring me my change!"

But the manager, fearing his restaurant's reputation would suffer, refused to take the gold piece, and instead brought Falsehood change for the first gold piece he claimed to have spent. Then he took the waiter aside and called him a scoundrel, and said he had a mind to fire him.

And as much as the waiter protested that he'd never collected a cent from the man, the manager refused to believe him. "Oh Truth, where have you hidden yourself?" the waiter sighed. "Have you now deserted even us hard-working souls?" "No, I'm here," Truth groaned to himself, "but my judgment gave way to my hunger, and now I can't speak up without breaking my promise to Falsehood."

As soon as they were on the street, Falsehood gave a hearty laugh and slapped Truth on the back. "You see how the world works?" he cried. "I managed it all quite well, don't you think?" But Truth slipped from his side. "I'd rather starve than live as you do," he said. And so, Truth and Falsehood went their separate ways, and never traveled together again, until the 21st Century.

A DROP OF RAIN... A BIT OF SUN

An ancient rabbi, the Baal Shem Tov, one day was standing on a hill with his students when they noticed foreign troops invading their town. From their vantage point they were able to see all of the horror and violence of the attack. The rabbi looked up to heaven and cried out, *"Ohm if I only were God!"*

A student asked, *"But master, if you were God, what would you do differently?"* The rabbi answered him, *"If I were God, I would do nothing differently. But If I were God, I would understand."*

We cannot stop the failure of our culture- the falling is necessary for the rising. Falling Upward! To UNDERSTAND THIS is necessary to keep from fear, worry, stress etc. He had to die before He could RISE.

The Rabbi of Lelov said to his Disciples: ***"A man cannot be redeemed until he recognizes the flaws in his soul and tries to mend them. A nation cannot be redeemed until it recognizes the flaws in its soul and tries to mend them. Whoever permits no recognition of his flaws, be it man or nation, permits no redemption. We can be redeemed to the extent to which we recognize ourselves."***

"When Jacob's sons said to Joseph: 'We are upright men,' he answered: 'That is why I spoke to you saying: You are spies.' But later, when they confessed the truth with their lips and with their hearts, and said to one another, 'We are truly guilty concerning our brother,' the first gleam of their redemption dawned. Overcome with compassion, Joseph turned aside and wept."

"Think of me, because I am always thinking of you." - Jesus

There is both good and evil in the world, but the line separating them runs not between nations or institutions or groups or even individuals; the line that separates good and evil runs through the core of each nation, each institution, each group, and, most tellingly, through the core of each human being, through each one of us. Cutting through each one of us is the reality of our own limitation. ***"There is a crack in everything God has made,"*** Emerson.

WORDS FROM A TRUE PROPHET: One of the chief tasks of a prophet is to interpret the present moment for the people. Father Richard Rohr, OFM. CERTAINLY, does just that!! ***"Words of love are not the language of corporate America, politicians, or most cultures. This is not the language of the "One percent" who so often "train" us in how to be and what we ought to want. WE HAVE TO BE TAUGHT THIS DEEPER WISDOM RIGHT NOW, OR CIVILIZATION WILL CONTINUE IN ITS RAPID DOWNWARD SPIRAL. Surrender, yielding, trusting and giving are never going to appeal to the ego. YET WE IGNORE SUCH EMBEDDED WISDOM AT OUR IMPENDING PERIL."*** Written by a true prophet Richard Rohr in **2016**, NOW, 5 years hence! ("The Divine Dance" Pg.97)

"It is not so much the things you know that hurt you, as the thing you "KNOW" that ain't so."
- Will Rogers



VISION AND REALITY

Some readers have inquired why I have, all of a sudden, become interested in national and social issues. **Not so!** In the 60's I marched in solidarity with Dr. Martin Luther King; I preached and taught all my life against racism; ***"It would be a disaster if one more drop of blood was shed in this war against racism. There is nothing as strong as an idea whose time has come."*** - Pfeiffer, sermon, 1965. I didn't eat grapes or grape jelly for years to be united with Caesar Chavez and his United Farm Workers protest; I met Cesar. I refused to pay my federal taxes for 2 years in protest of the Nixon bombing of Hanoi on Christmas morning, including the bombing of a

school. The IRS came after me when the war ended. Haile Selassie, the Emperor of Ethiopia, gave up drinking coffee for his people. If he could do this, I figured I could do this for Jesus and His people. I didn't drink coffee for 25 years. As a celibate priest, I emptied my checkbook each month with donations to the missions etc. I, with my high school prayer group, marched in protest of the opening of a "adult book store" in the neighborhood. Mary's Field retreats included special retreats for: all Hispanic, all African Americans, all alcoholics, all LGBTQ etc... Many babies, marriages, students, teachers etc. saved and helped.

Cindy, my wife, as a member of Pennsylvanians for Human Life and Birthright, was a part of pro-life demonstrations in Harrisburg, Pa. and Washington D. C.; wrote articles, with great courage, in her college paper, made numerous appearances in public high school health classes and was on T.V. promoting the pro- life position. She is an expert.

ONE EXAMPLE: At Mary’s Field, one mother with whom we prayed and supplied with children’s needs, about 25 years ago, and convinced to hold and not abort her baby e-mailed us about a year ago, telling us she had twin girls and how proud she was of all of the wonderful things her girls were doing!! WE have many stories like this. Our “social antennae” have always been on high alert. We are not “Johnnies Come Lately” to social and political issues that are also **SERIOUS RELIGIOUS AND MORAL ISSUES** that **CLEARLY** have devastating effects on family, marriage, society, children, the culture. Our lives have been a commitment to building both the City of God and the City of Man. All of your contributions have been a part of this!! To be quiet is the sin. In 1939, it cost the Polish people and Polish Catholic Church the death of 2000 Catholic priests. Cindy and I have never asked anyone to do what we haven’t **DONE FIRST**.

“If Jesus had taken a poll, He would never have preached the Gospel” - Congressman Hyde.

“Let your light shine before men, (WHY) - SO THEY CAN GIVE PRAISE TO THEIR HEAVENLY FATHER.” “Whoever speaks on his own is bent on self-glorification. The person who seeks glory for him who sent him/her is truthful; there is no dishonesty in their heart.” John 2:18

“Now I occupy my soul and all my energy in his service. I no longer tend the flock, nor have I any other work, now that my every act is love. If then, I am no longer seen or found on the common. You will say that I am lost, that, stricken by love, I lost myself, and was found.” - St. John of the Cross.

ALWAYS IN HUMILITY, IN SERVANTHOOD, IN SOUL-CARE, IN THE GOSPEL, TRUTH IN LOVE, ALWAYS!!

Each night before I pray vespers and night prayer, I pray the following prayer for help. St. Augustine summed it up well:

The Litany of Humility

“O Jesus, meek and humble of heart, Hear me. From the desire of being esteemed – **Response: “Deliver me, O Jesus.”**

From the desire of being jealous and envious of other’s success, Deliver me, O Jesus.
From the desire of being honored praised or esteemed above others. Deliver me, O Jesus

From the desire of being consulted - **Response: “Deliver me, O Jesus.”**
From the desire of being approved - **Response: “Deliver me, O Jesus.”**
From the fear of being rejected, humiliated or ridiculed - **Response: “Deliver me, O Jesus.”**

From the fear of being falsely accused - **Response: “Deliver me, O Jesus.”**
From the fear of being judged unfairly - **Response: “Deliver me, O Jesus.”**
From the fear of being forgotten - **Response: “Deliver me, O Jesus.”**
From the fear of being a failure - **Response: “Deliver me, O Jesus.”**

That others may be loved more than I – **Response: “Jesus, grant me the grace to desire it.”**
That others may be esteemed more than I – **Response: “Jesus, grant me the grace to desire it.”**
That, in the opinion of the world, others may increase and I may decrease – **Response: “Jesus, grant me the grace to desire it.”**
That others may be chosen and praised and I go unnoticed – **Response: “Jesus, grant me the grace to desire it.”**
That others may be preferred to me in everything – **Response: “Jesus, grant me the grace to desire it.”**
That others may become holier than I, provided that I may become as holy as I should – **Response: “Jesus, grant me the grace to desire it.”**

*“If you should ask me what are the ways of God, I would tell you that the first is humility; the second is humility, and the third is humility. Not that there are no other precepts to give, but if humility does not precede all that we do, **our efforts are FRUITLESS.**”*

In your relations with one another, clothe yourselves with **humility**, because God is stern with the arrogant but to the **humble**, he shows kindness. Bow **humbly** under God’s mighty hand so that in due time he may lift you high. Cast all your cares on him because he cares for you. 1 Peter 5: 5-7.

*“All of you should be like-minded, sympathetic, loving toward one another, kindly disposed, and **humble**. Do not return evil for evil or insult for insult. Return a blessing instead. This you have been called to do.” 1 Peter 3: 8-9.*

Pope Francis has done a tremendous and scandalous disservice to the pro-life movement throughout the world by his most gracious and non-qualifying welcome of Nancy Pelosi and Mr. Biden. Welcome is fine, but he had to clearly say that their abortion position is evil and contrary to Catholic teaching. St. John Paul II, author of "Evangelium Vitae" - "The Gospel of Life" is quaking in his grave!! Both He, and Benedict admonished Ms. Pelosi in 15 minutes; and no pictures.



"Take. O Lord and receive all my liberty, my memory, my understanding, and my entire will. All I have and all I possess are yours, Lord. You have given it all to me. Dispense of it according to your will. Give me only your love and your grace, and I want nothing more." Pedro Arrupe, former Superior General of the Jesuits.

Learn to love with all of your heart and accept the unlovable side of others, for anyone can love a rose, but only a great heart can include the thorns.

SPEAKING SOFTLY

"Bis dat qui cito dat", is Latin for **"She gives twice who gives quickly"**. I taught my Latin students about 200 Latin expressions that they might encounter in their cultured lives. I shared **"Bis dat qui cito dat"** as a segue to telling the following true story about my wife, Cindy.

WE WERE ON OUR WAY HOME FROM SHOP RITE; SIX CHILDREN IN THE STATION WAGON-AGES 2 TO 12. I WAS DRIVING; CINDY WAS IN THE FRONT PASSENGER SEAT. IT WAS RAINING "CATS AND DOGS". WE WERE STOPPED IN SLOW MOVING TRAFFIC ABOUT A CITY BLOCK FROM A STOP LIGHT. THE SIDEWALK WAS JUST TO THE RIGHT OF THE CAR. WE SAW A STREET PERSON WALKING ALONG THE SIDE OF THE CAR, SOAKING WET.

THERE WAS AN UMBRELLA, STILL DRIPPING WET ON THE CAR FLOOR IN FRONT OF CINDY. WITHOUT A MOMENT OF HESITATION CINDY TOOK THE UMBRELLA, OPENED THE CAR DOOR, RAISED IT AND GAVE IT TO THE DRIPPING WET MAN AND, JUST AS QUICKLY, GOT BACK INTO THE CAR. TRAFFIC WAS NOW OPEN, WE MOVED ON.

NOT A WORD WAS EXCHANGED IN THAT HOLY MOMENT BUT NONE OF US HAVE EVER FORGOTTEN THAT MOMENT OF "QUICKLY GIVEN", "TWICE GIVEN", ACT OF KINDNESS. MY WIFE, THE MOTHER OF SIX!! SHE IS SPECIAL. I AM BLESSED!!! THERE, BUT FOR THE GRACE OF GOD AND THE LOVE OF A BEAUTIFUL WOMAN GO I. ANOTHER REASON WHY WE NEED SOME MARRIED PRIESTS!!!

YOU COULD HEAR A PIN DROP AS I TOLD THIS STORY TO MY STUDENTS AND, IN THE TELLING, THEY KNEW MY WIFE, AND WHAT I VALUED, AND HOW WE, SO OFTEN, TAUGHT OUR CHILDREN. BIS DAT QUI CITO DAT.AND YOUR NEIGHBOR AS YOURSELF"

Sometimes we teach best when we are not teaching at all. Kids today, I've found, respond more to WITNESSES than to teachers, and especially best, to teachers who DO WITNESS to what they believe and teach. "What you DO speaks so loud I cannot hear what you are saying." Emerson. My students never met Cindy, but they knew her!!

Learn to love with all your heart and accept the unlovable side of others; for anyone can love a rose, but only a great heart can include the thorns."

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