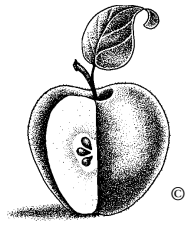


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Volume 24, # 4

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AN ADVENT REFLECTION Fr. Brian Cavanaugh, TOR

“During Advent opportunities for works of charity abound calling out for Christians from every side—a sack of food for a needy family, money dropped in a Salvation Army kettle, a donation to an Indian school, a toy for ‘Toys-for-Tots,’ etc. Unfortunately, these works of charity so easily can assuage the Christian conscience, while doing nothing to bring about a solution to the root causes of the problem.

Works of justice, on the other hand, follow *the road less traveled* of Advent’s hope to pursue solutions for difficult problems. Hope comes through works of justice rather than simply performing works of charity.”

WISDOM SEEDS William Arthur Ward

“Life can be fraught with fear or festive with faith; arid with apprehensions or alive with aspirations.”

4 STEPS TO PERSISTENCE Napoleon Hill

Think & Grow Rich, p. 184

1. A definite purpose backed by a burning desire for its fulfillment.
2. A definite plan, expressed in continuous action.
3. A mind closed tightly against all negative and discouraging influences, including negative suggestions of relatives, friends and acquaintances.
4. A friendly alliance with one or more persons who will encourage one to follow through with both plan and purpose.

DREAMERS OF DAY T.E. Lawrence,

The Seven Pillars of Wisdom

“All men dream but not equally. Those who dream by night in the dusty recesses of their minds, wake in the day to find that it was vanity, but the dreamers of the day are dangerous men, for they may

act on their dreams with open eyes, to make it possible.”



DRAWN TO ENTHUSIASM Steve Goodier

LifeSupportSystem.com

“People are drawn to enthusiasm. Where there is no enthusiasm, there is no passion. Where there is no passion, there is no great living. Are we meant simply to be lukewarm? From antiquity to the present, indifference in any realm has prohibited people from living whole and happy lives.”

SPIRITUALITY OF ACCEPTANCE Ernest Kurtz

The Spirituality of Imperfection, p. 61

“‘Wholeness’...does not mean that the heart is not ‘broken,’ that the pain does not sear. To experience sadness, despair, tears and howls of pain demonstrates not some violation or deficit of spirituality but rather the ultimate spirituality of acceptance. For such acceptance is the beginning of spirituality.”

THE DRAGON’S ALMANAC Justin Whittle

691: Make no promises when you are seized by joy; write no letters when you are seized by anger” (Chinese proverb).

ON INTEGRITY Brian Tracy

YourSuccessStore.com

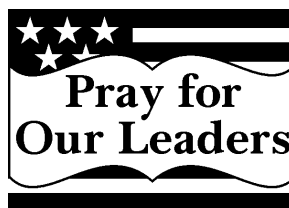
“Integrity is the most desired, demanded, and respected quality of leadership.”

NATION’S SPIRITUAL FORCE Franklin D. Roosevelt

“The driving force of a nation lies in its spiritual purpose. Physical strength can never permanently withstand the impact of the spiritual force.”

THE LEADERSHIP CHALLENGE Kouses & Posner, p. xvi

“Leadership myth says that leaders are ‘charismatic,’ that they possess some special gift. At best this distorts our appreciation of leaders. At worst it can lead to hero worship and cultism. To be sure,



leaders must be energetic and enthusiastic. But, a leaders' dynamism does not come from special powers. It comes from a strong belief in a purpose and a willingness to express that conviction."

TO TALK WELL Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart

"To talk well and eloquently is a very great art, but that an equally great one is to know the right moment to stop."

SHAPE YOUR CHARACTER Clarence Walton

"Of all living creatures, only humans have the power to shape their own character, to choose between honorable and dishonorable behavior."

WRITING BRINGS DEFINITION Bishop Ken Untener
Preaching Better, p. 48

"Writing brings definition to our attempt to express the joy, hope, grief, and anxiety of real life. It's a lot easier to think a good thought than to express it. It's a lot easier to savor the smell of a flower than to describe the experience. Writing brings a homily from existence inside our mind to existence outside our mind—quite a bridge to cross.

Once we've decided on a core thought, we have to figure out how we're going to express it. Writing is the best way to do that."

FAN THE SPARK Wilfred A. Peterson

"Words of encouragement fan the spark of genius into the flame of achievement."

HOLY AUDACITY Lettie Cowman
Streams in the Desert, p. 98

"One of the special marks of the Holy Ghost in the Apostolic Church was the spirit of boldness. One of the most essential qualities of the faith that is to attempt great things for God, and expect great things from God, is holy audacity. Where we are dealing with a supernatural being, and taking from Him things that are humanly impossible, it is easier to take much than little; it is easier to stand in a place of audacious trust than in a place of cautious, timid clinging..."

VICTIMS OF AFFLUENZA John de Graff

On a public television special titled "Affluenza" producer John de Graff said, "Americans are victims of "AF-FLU-EN-ZA," which he describes as "an epidemic of stress,

overwork, shopping and debt caused by dogged pursuit of the American dream; a bloated, sluggish and unfilled feeling that results from one's efforts to keep up with the Joneses."

START-STOP *Bits & Pieces*, Vol. T, # 23

"It's the START that STOPS most people."

ON KNOWLEDGE Kung Fu Tzu

"When you know some thing, say what you know. When you don't know something, say that you don't know. That is knowledge."

LET ME NOT KEEP CHRISTMAS Linda Felver
A Book of Christmas, Nashville: Upper Rooms, 1988, p. 48

"Let me not wrap, stack, box, bag, tie, tag, bundle, seal, KEEP Christmas.

Christmas kept is liable to mold.

Let me give Christmas away, unwrapped, by exuberant armfuls. Let me share, dance, LIVE Christmas unpretentiously, merrily, responsibly with overflowing hands, tireless steps and sparkling eyes.

Christmas given away will stay fresh—even until it comes again."

THE WEIGHT OF A SNOWFLAKE *Fresh Packet of Sower's Seeds*, # 70

Not too long ago in a place not too far away, a field mouse asked a wise old owl what is the weight of a snowflake. "Why nothing more than nothing," answered the owl.

The mouse went on to tell the owl about the time he was resting on a branch in a fir tree, counting each snowflake until the number was exactly 3 million, 471 thousand, 952. Then with the settling of the very next flake—CRACK. The branch suddenly snapped, tumbling mouse and snow to the ground. "Humph ... Such was the weight of nothing," said the mouse.

So the next time you think your contributions, your acts of charity, your works for justice, your gifts of love, and your talents are nothing, or that they are small in comparison to those of others, remember that when one is added to another, and then to another and so forth, great things can happen from nothing. In the same way, what seems to be ordinary can be transformed into something extraordinary with just a little extra nothing.

Your mission is to create great things once again out of nothingness, to transform the ordinary into the extraordinary.

