



## *Spiritual Care Notes: June 2019*

Happy Father's Day to all fathers, as we celebrate on June 16, 2019!!!

On Father's Day a few years ago, I greeted the then-parochial vicar at my home parish with, "Happy Father's Day!" Since everyone calls him "Father", I thought he'd take it in the humorous spirit with which it was offered. Unfortunately, he didn't interpret it in the context with which it was delivered, and my ill-fated attempt at humor fell flat. I felt kind of like my fellow University of Nebraska alum Johnny Carson, when one of his "Tonight Show" monologs bombed. I do know a recently-ordained priest in the Diocese of Portland, Maine, who responded later in life to the call to the priesthood as a second career. He in fact does have a now-teenage son; I wonder if his son introduces him by saying, "I'd like you to meet my father, the father." (Let's see if I have another Johnny Carson moment!)

Later this month, the Church honors two of her most important saints, Peter and Paul. Peter is considered to be the first pope, as he became the *de facto* leader of the apostles following Christ's death and resurrection. Paul is perhaps the greatest evangelizer the Catholic Church has ever seen. And yet, both of these great saints were not without their faults. As Christ was on trial at the hands of Pontius Pilate, Peter denied publicly 3 times that he knew Jesus – even though Jesus had declared earlier that Peter would be the foundation of his church. Before his conversion on the road to Damascus, Paul was a ruthless persecutor of the early Christian church – he even stood by idly, giving tacit approval, as the first Christian martyr, the apostle Stephen, was stoned to death just outside the gates of Jerusalem.

Why didn't Christ choose more pious and devoted persons to lead the church and spread the message of the Gospel? The reason is that Christ chooses ordinary people, complete with their human frailties, to be his messengers on earth. Being a saint isn't something reserved for the most holy, the most pious or the most merciful. You and I can be saints in our everyday lives. We are holy; we can be virtuous; we can show mercy and kindness to one another.

Former EWTN Radio host Patrick Coffin would close the "Catholic Answers Live" program with the words, "Be a saint – what else is there?" Let us be saints together, you and me – we may never be anything more important in our lives!

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