



Pastor's Column

St. Peter Catholic Church

June 17, 2018 ~ Eleventh Sunday in Ordinary Time

Love Our Enemies...Including Demons???

The Lord commands us to love our enemies, to pray for those who hate us and persecute us (Mt 5:44). Well, it seems that Satan and his minions are our *worst* enemies. Are we, therefore, to love them, too, and pray for them as well?

As for loving Satan and demons, we remember what true love is: willing the good of the other for the sake of the other. Now, the *highest* good of the other is salvation: eternal life in the Kingdom of Heaven with God, the angels, and the saints forever. Perhaps there is not much harm in loving Satan and demons with that aim and end in mind, but to do so would be the very epitome of wishful thinking and truly a waste of time and effort. Why is that? Because there is no hope for salvation for them. Why? Because remember that Satan and the demons originally were angels but now are *fallen* angels. Angels, being pure spirit, were endowed from the very beginning with perfect knowledge and the fullness of free will. Which means that, in the case of Satan and the demons, if they should freely choose to rebel against God's will, they had full knowledge of what that would entail: fall from grace, expulsion from Heaven (where God *is*), because they rejected God and so decided that they would rather be where God is *not* (in other words: hell).

And so, if to love is to will the good of the other for the sake of the other, and if the highest good is eternal life in Heaven, and if Satan and demons have already irrevocably made their choice to *not* be in Heaven...then loving them has not point and serves no purpose. And we, who are so mortal and weak, should see our limited lives much better spent on loving those who in some way can still benefit from the fruits of our love for them.

As for praying for Satan and the demons: again, waste of time. Praying for somebody has its aim and end ultimately at their salvation. And so, like trying to love Satan and the demons, it is truly a colossal waste of our time and effort to pray for them when prayer simply will have no effect.

Now, all of this is not to say that God is without mercy. God is all-loving, all-merciful, and undoubtedly would receive all hellbound creatures of His Creation if He could...but yet again, with their perfect knowledge and fullness of free will, Satan and the demons made their choice, and they will never do anything to undo the choice they made. They damned themselves forever by making the free choice in their perfect understanding to reject God.

The famous American exorcist, Fr. Gary Thomas, teaches this. And in the end, he counsels that with regard to Satan and the demons, we just leave them for Jesus alone to take care of, and we focus our time and efforts instead on where our love and prayers actually can have an impact: peace in our world, the salvation of souls in Purgatory and here on Earth, and above all else the greater glory of God.

~ Fr. Lewis