Columns
Spirituality



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According to the results of a Google search, equilibrium is a state of balance.

The action of balancing — for example, wheel balance — corrects uneven distribution of weight. Unbalanced wheels lead to vibration, excessive tire wear, damage to the suspension and other problems. I like to compare that physical wheel balance with our lives.

We must learn to remain conscious of what is on the inside and what is on the outside. It means being present to take note of the happenings in our environment as well as the emotions that we are feeling at any point in time. I have observed with dismay that in our advanced technological era, we human beings seem to have come to abhor silence. Today, one moves from radio, to television, to phone, then emails, and Whatsapp, Twitter and Messenger — to mention only a few.

Quite a busy world! But who has time to listen to the interior man/woman now? It would not surprise me if this might explain why there are escalating levels of crime in every part of the world.

According to the prophet Jeremiah (11:4-5), the Lord says to his people, "Listen to my voice and do all that I command you." Also in Jeremiah 31:33-34 the Lord says, "I will place my law within them and write it upon their hearts ..." Therefore, all is not lost. There is time to change our world and improve it if we can individually look inside and identify where each of us missed the way. Because Socrates said, "An unexamined life is not worth living."

At baptism, we were made children of God after being cleansed from original sin. Several sacramentals were used: the candle to symbolize the light of Christ; water to symbolize cleansing; the white cloth to symbolize holiness; and the holy oils to symbolize consecration.

When the priest placed the white cloth on our heads during the rite, he reminded us to keep it clean and to take it to heaven spotless — symbolizing our human hearts that we must endeavor to keep clean.

On that particular "red letter day" — a very memorable day in one's life that is like no other day — the joy was complete. Those who were baptized as adults might have prayed that the day would not come to an end. Let me ask you: Do you still feel the same joy, excitement and zeal today?

In his book *Why Am I Afraid to Tell You Who I Am?*, John Powell said that as we grow, we all endure loneliness, frustration, and emotional and spiritual hunger — and somehow these pains are due to failures in love. In *Why Am I Afraid to Love?*, he concludes, "The essential sadness of such pain is that it magnetizes the focus of our attention; it preoccupies us with our selves. This self-preoccupation is an absolute obstacle to a life of love."

In my personal reflection and my experience, I have come to realize that in the contemporary world, there are things that mean much more than holiness to some people. They include greed for power, fame and material riches. To some extent, all three are important for our healthy living. Nevertheless, as children of God, you and I have a spiritual journey to make until we reach our final homeland where God lives. Nothing therefore should divert us to another direction, no matter how tempting the bait.

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But, for example, if one would contemplate killing someone and actually carry it out for any of those three motives, then that power, fame, material wealth or any other thing is not worth anything at all. Only God has a right to take life since he is the fountain of it. No human being can do so — regardless of the position of power or the amount of wealth — without committing a serious offense.

St. Paul in his letter to the Romans (8:35-39) asks:

> What will separate us from the love of Christ? Will anguish, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or the sword? For I am convinced that neither death nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor present things, nor future things, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Despite all the seasons that we may have to pass through, as Christians we are encouraged by the great apostle Paul to allow nothing to come between us and Christ, who is eternal life.

Each day has plenty of concerns to distract us, so make greater efforts to remain focused on where you are going. The idea of equilibrium illustrates it clearly: Unless we try to harmonize the inner person and the outside world, then we are likely to go the easy way — paying attention to the world and neglecting the inner person. "Life is lived inside out," as clinical psychologist Edward Dreyfus suggests. There can be no better way of putting it.

There is one clear way of overcoming failures to love. This is the way taught by the Master himself when he said "Do to others whatever you would have them do to you. This is the law and the prophets" (Matthew 7:12).

To love requires enormous motivation. In a grasping world, in a world that is gouging and clawing for the riches of this world, Christians by their commitment to love should stand out as breathtaking exceptions. True Christians must seek only the good, the fulfillment and the destiny of their fellow human beings. Love will always be their most eloquent argument and effective means.

It is difficult, and yet the Lord Jesus of the Gospels stands with us, giving us our Christian imperative: "By this shall others know that you are my disciples, that you love one another" (John 13:35).