

Meditation 4

ROMANS 12:1-12

What does God want...?

“I urge you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God, your spiritual worship. Do not conform yourselves to this age but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and pleasing and perfect. For by the grace given to me I tell everyone among you not to think of himself more highly than one ought to think, but to think soberly, each according to the measure of faith that God has apportioned. For as in one body we have many parts, and all the parts do not have the same function, so we, though many, are one body in Christ and individually parts of one another.

Since we have gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, let us exercise them: if prophecy, in proportion to the faith; if ministry, in ministering; if one is a teacher, in teaching; if one exhorts, in exhortation; if one contributes, in generosity; if one is over others, with diligence; if one does acts of mercy, with cheerfulness. Let love be sincere; hate what is evil, hold on to what is good; love one another with mutual affection; anticipate one another in showing honor. Do not grow slack in zeal, be fervent in spirit, serve the Lord. Rejoice in hope, endure in affliction, persevere in prayer.”

Points for Meditation

- 1) We continue our reflection, our meditation on discernment, which is a key part of mentoring, as we mentioned in our last meditation. Keeping in mind a definition for discernment: a prudential judgement about what God wants. It is the process by which we discover God’s will for us.

- 2) “. . . be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that you may discern what the will of God is, what is good and pleasing and perfect.” (Rom 12:2)
- a. Book: *When you pray, say: “Father”* by Fr. Jean LaFrance. Listen to what he writes: “Reading the ‘Spiritual Diary’ of St. Ignatius you realize just how much he got tired over, sweat over and even cried over trying to understand what God wanted from him. At first he searched in one direction. Then when that way seemed barred or blocked, he went in another, until he found the will of God in the experience, of what he dubbed “consolations.”
 - b. In the end it isn’t so important what the results or the conclusions are of your discernment. The most important thing in the process is the transformation of your heart! It is the quest of making your heart ever more available, open, ready to accept what God wants from you!
 - c. It is necessary to be more attentive to the deep movements of purification of your heart in prayer, than to the decision you will be making. This decision will be made clear in the moment you least expect it as a gratuitous gift of God.

- 3) What does God want? Fr. Jean LaFrance goes on to write: “The purification of your heart consists essentially in being available, open, willing to do God’s will. That is, when you find yourself having to make a decision, you must first refrain from preferring one possibility over another. Next you need to leave behind and abandon every sort of bias, prejudice, fear, worry, attachment.” Here are some practical steps that Jean LaFrance suggests:

“First of all, leave some time open before you follow your first impulse.

Secondly, distance yourself from the above-mentioned tendencies: biases, prejudices, fears, worries (purification of attachments).

Thirdly, doubt your own judgement and objectivity (this is where our mentor is helpful).

Fourthly, place yourself under God’s gaze (prayer) in order to see what our “resistances” might be to being totally open to His will.

Lastly, we should try to overcome those “resistances” through penance and prayer. The signs of coming to a good discernment are the fruits of the Holy Spirit: “love, joy, peace, dominion of self, patience. . .”

