

one

We are not in control.

This weekend I dropped my phone in water. It could not swim and unfortunately it drowned. I went to buy a new one and in the process was locked out of my Apple account for the next two weeks. No contacts, no anything. Then it dawned on me. We live under the illusion of control.

We think that if we have enough foresight, make the right preparations and decisions, control all the variables - we can protect ourselves and our loved ones against all loss.

This is an illusion! We are not in control of the world. There are infinite variables, threats and opportunities. We cannot foresee and control them all? But under this illusion of control, we try and that is why we suffer from anxiety and anger.

Wake up from the illusion.

two

In the Sermon on the Mount Jesus tells us to Trust in God Our Father

'That is why I am telling you not to worry about your life and what you are to eat, nor about your body and how you are to clothe it. Surely life means more than food, and the body more than clothing! Look at the birds in the sky. They do not sow or reap or gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are we not worth much more than they are? Can any of you, for all his worrying, add one single cubit to his span of life? And why worry about I-Phones? Think of the flowers growing in the fields; they never have to work or spin; yet I assure you that not even Solomon in all his regalia was robed like one of these. Now if that is how God clothes the grass in the field which is there today and thrown into the furnace tomorrow, will he not much more look after you, you men of little faith? So do not worry; do not say, "What are we to eat? What are we to drink? How are we to be clothed?" It is the pagans who set their hearts on all these things. Your heavenly Father knows you need them all. Set your hearts on his kingdom first, and on his will and all these other things will be given you as well. So do not worry about tomorrow: tomorrow will take care of itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own.

three

Most people mistakenly think The Count of Monte Cristo is about revenge. It is not. It's about hope and trusting in God's care.

Now I won't spoil anything big, but I'll explain the main premise. The Count, originally Edmon Dantes, was treacherously betrayed and sentenced to life in prison for a crime he did not commit. Dantes eventually escapes prison, but instead of seeing the providence in his prison sentence, the things he learned there, and the relationship he formed with his fellow prisoner, the Abbe, he sees only the misfortune. Feeling as if Providence has failed him, he tries to become Providence, to control everything and trust in no one but himself. In the process he becomes a slave, obsessed with controlling everything. Ironically, he has two slaves, Ali and Heide, whom the Count of Monte Cristo takes care of so well they have no concerns, no fears, no anxieties or worries. Because they have someone who they know cares for them, they live totally free from anxiety, worry and fear, totally in peace, contentment, and joy - real freedom. In fact, when they all arrive in France, a country that had abolished slavery, technically they could go free, but they want to stay with the Count, because they know He will always care for them.

If you have no one to rely on but yourself, you will become obsessed and enslaved with the effort to take care of everything. On the other hand, we become totally free if we depend totally upon another – especially if that other is God.

This is why children are the most free. They have someone who loves them, whom they can rely on. But so do we!

four

No matter what happens in the world or your life, you are safe. Why? Because God is your Father. Since He is God, and all things are within His wisdom and power, nothing can happen that He does not will or allow and, in both cases, He will work all things for your greatest good. That is His nature; He cannot do otherwise.

Now, the only way we can stop the good God wants to do in our lives is by ripping the control out of His hands and trying to control all things.

Yet even then, if we turn back to God, He will even use those bad decisions for our greatest good.

Living by Divine Providence sets you free from fear - to accomplish the greatest good with the greatest ease - and it is the key to Peace.

five

We must learn to surrender to God.

Surrendering to God does not mean giving up.

Surrender means: you do what is within your power and zone of responsibility. Then let God do all that is within His power and responsibility.

Surrender does not dispense us from taking responsibility and doing our part to fulfill God's will

Surrender does dispense us from trying to be God.

You do your part. Let Him do the rest.

As the well-known proverb has it: "Do what you ought, come what may." For God works all things for good for those who love him.