

REFLECTION

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WE need to see to it that even as we immerse ourselves as deeply as possible in our earthly affairs, we do not lose our sense of heaven and eternity. In fact, the ideal is that as we go deeper in our temporal affairs, our sense of heaven and eternity should also become sharper.

This is always possible and doable as long as we are guided first of all by our faith rather than by our feelings and by our merely human estimation of things. Let's always remember that it is our faith, our Christian faith, that gives the whole picture of our life—where we come from, where we are supposed to go, the purpose of our life here on earth, the true value of our mundane concerns, etc.

Let's be theological in our thinking and reaction to the things of this world. For that, we of course would need some training.

It should consist of always referring things to God, whatever they may be—good or bad, a success or a failure, a victory or a defeat, etc. We need to feel the urge to do so.

In short, we have to keep our spiritual and supernatural bearing which should involve a certain detachment from the things of the world. For this detachment to be lived, we should assume a certain spirit of gamesmanship or sportsmanship, since the effectiveness of our earthly affairs is not so much in whether we win or succeed in them as in whether we manage to refer them to God whatever the outcome.

We try to do our best to win in whatever endeavor we do, but just the same, whether we win or lose we remain happy and assured that we are all friends, brothers and sisters, and children of God.

The detachment involved here can be of the heroic type as illustrated in the gospel. "If your hand or your foot causes you to stumble," Christ said, "cut it off and throw it away. It is better for you to enter life maimed or crippled than to have two hands or two feet and be thrown eternal fire. And if your eye causes you to stumble, gouge it out and throw it away. It is better for you to enter life with one eye than to have two eyes and be thrown into the fire of hell." (Mt 18,8-9)

Though these words should not be taken too literally, we have to understand that we have to be ready to take extraordinary means if only to stay the course in our earthly activities.

We cannot deny that we are ranged against formidable enemies in our earthly life that tend to bind us only to time and space, as if our whole life has nothing beyond those dimensions.

We have to constantly remind ourselves of what the Letter to the Hebrews has told us clearly. "We don't have a permanent city here on earth, but we are looking for the city that we will have in the future." (13,14)

We have to train our mind and heart as well as our feelings and senses to conform themselves to this truth of our faith.

In our personal prayers and meditations, let us consider from time to time the reality of heaven and reinforce that primitive yearning we have in our heart for a life without end, for a happiness that has no limits, which can only take place in heaven.

Let us remind ourselves frequently that our faith tells us that we actually come from God, and not just from our parents, and we are meant to be with God forever in heaven after our earthly sojourn which is meant to test us if we want to be with God or just with ourselves.