

THE GOOD PEOPLE AMONG US

The Almighty God created us to be good. Children are naturally good, until they are tainted by adulthood. Not that children do not fight. However, their spats do not last a lifetime.

For the past several weeks, I have been receiving hundreds of hand-made cards from the students of our Catholic Schools. They were sent to me in bundles on the occasion of my 50th anniversary of ordination as a priest. If the Lord will listen to and accept all the prayers and sacrifices promised by those students in my behalf, I will get to heaven for sure. I am grateful.

Some cards were very artistic and took a lot of work. Others mentioned how much they appreciated my ministry. Several said that I was the best bishop they had ever known. Of course, I believe that, - considering the fact that they were all born during the time that I have been the Diocesan Bishop. A number gave me advice, - at least one wishing me another 50 years! One group of cards carried the message that I “rock.” (I have to find out what that means.)

Priests are programmed to be good. (Alas, we, too, are human.) I made the observation that the priests’ retreat in which I participated last June was one of the best. Without taking anything away from the retreat master, it was the atmosphere among the priests participants that did it for me. There was a wonderful spirit of community and brotherhood. It was simply good to be there with them.

I thought that we might have had a unique blend of priests at that first retreat. However, at least one of our priests who attended the second retreat has had the same reaction. I have heard of priests hosting a gathering to welcome the newly assigned priests to their area. What a priestly thing to do! The fact that, in most cases, parishioners have expressed their regret at losing their Pastor to another parish also testifies to the goodness of our priests.

There are good people in government, as well. I am impressed by Shirley Sherrod. You will recall that she is the one who was fired from the U. S. Department of Agriculture for a speech that she made four months ago, which was purposely taken out of context. It appears that no one in the government bothered to check out the facts. Political correctness took over.

Does not reality matter anymore? Do not moral standards count anymore? They do appear to be a part of Ms. Sherrod’s life. In this difficult, unjust, and traumatic situation in her life, I have not heard her say anything bad about anyone. She has not lashed back. Even the person who was the one that actually called her to ask for her resignation received nothing but kind words.

Ms. Sherrod appears to be a very balanced person, secure in herself, extremely authentic about who she is, and, probably, grounded in God. I would be willing to wager that there are a lot more good people that we do not hear about. The reason for that is that it takes courage to be good in a world that has become politicized and commercialized.

Many complain about the state of our society today, failing to admit that we are the society. It is what we are. There are a lot of good people that make up that society. If we were to acknowledge the goodness of those around us and let them know that we value it, they might be encouraged to let it show more often.