

Your Favorite Page

IMPOSSIBILITIES IN THE WORLD

1. You can't count your hair.
2. You can't wash your eyes with soap.
3. You can't breathe when your tongue is out.
4. ***

10 THINGS I KNOW ABOUT YOU

- 1) You are reading this.
- 2) You are human.
- 3) You can't say the letter "P" without separating your lips.
- 4) You just attempted to do it.
- 6) You are laughing at yourself.
- 7) You have a smile on your face and you skipped No. 5.
- 8) You just checked to see if there is a No. 5.
- 9) You laugh at this because you are a fun loving person and everyone does it too.

LEGAL CIRCLES

By the Court Clerk: Please repeat after me, "I swear by Almighty God ..."

By the Witness: I swear by Almighty God.

Clerk: That the evidence that I give ...

Witness: That's right.

Clerk: Repeat it.

Witness: Repeat it.

Clerk: No! Repeat what I said.

Witness: What you said when?

Clerk: That the evidence that I give ...

Witness: That the evidence that I give.

Clerk: Shall be the truth and ...

Witness: It will, and nothing but the truth!

Clerk: Please. Just repeat after me, "Shall be the truth and ..."

Witness: I'm not a scholar, you know.

Clerk: We can appreciate that. Just repeat after me, "Shall be the truth and ..."

Witness: Shall be the truth and.

Clerk: Say, "Nothing ..."

Witness: Okay. [Witness remains silent]

Clerk: No! Don't say nothing. Say, "Nothing but the truth ..."

Witness: Yes.

Clerk: Can't you say, "Nothing but the truth ...?"

Witness: Yes.

Clerk: Well? ... Do so.

Witness: You're confusing me.

Clerk: Just say, "Nothing but the truth ..."

Witness: Is that all?

Clerk: Yes.

Witness: Okay. I understand.

Clerk: Then say it.

Witness: What?

Clerk: "Nothing but the truth ..."

Witness: But I do! That's just it.

Clerk: You must say, "Nothing but the truth ..."

Witness: I will say nothing but the truth!

Clerk: Please, just repeat these four words

"Nothing," "But," "The" "Truth."

Witness: What? You mean, like, now?

Clerk: Yes! Now. Please. Just say those four words.

Witness: "Nothing. But. The. Truth."

Clerk: Thank you.

Witness: I'm just not a scholar you know.

*** Put your tongue back in your mouth, you silly person.

CREDIT CARD INFORMATION	
NAME: _____	
ZIP CODE: _____	
<input type="checkbox"/> Visa	<input type="checkbox"/> Mastercard <input type="checkbox"/> Discover
Amount you wish to give: _____	
Card Number: _____	
Expiration Date: _____	
3-Digit Security code _____	
Signature: _____	
<input type="checkbox"/> If you wish us to keep this credit card info. on file, check the box.	

CROSS LINKS

CONGREGATION OF HOLY CROSS, UNITED STATES PROVINCE OF PRIESTS AND BROTHERS
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Greetings, my friends!

I was just reminded that Ash Wednesday is next week, so I had better get the Links to the boss for editing, approval and all the other stuff that goes along with getting this newsletter to you. Never let it be said that I can't take a hint!

Actually, the next three pages have been long done. I wrote them shortly after the Notre Dame loss to Alabama. The first paragraph will give you the background. I didn't tell anyone I had written it, because I wanted to wait till the first "reminder" that I had to write this reflection and then with a flourish I'd present it with a "Ha!!! Beat you to it!!!" What remained to be done was this first page, primarily because I wanted to be sure to include all recent Holy Cross deaths.

We've had some notable ones, too; many of the older Notre Dame grads may recognize and remember two of these men.

First, on Nov. 30, 2012, was **Rev. James C. Fahey, C.S.C.** Jim was a parish priest through and through, serving in parishes in Indiana, Texas, Louisiana, Mexico and Peru. He had a fascinating hobby of making telescopes ... his workshop was right across from mine in Holy Cross Annex.

EASTER APPEAL

During the Easter Season, we in Holy Cross will be remembering at prayer and Mass those who have done so much for us – people like you.

If there are others you wish us to remember, jot their names on the enclosed prayer sheet and return it to us.

No offering is required, but if you choose to include one, it will be used for the general needs of Moreau Seminary and Holy Cross House.

Then came a long-time Rector at Notre Dame, **Rev. Matthew M. Miceli, C.S.C.**, or "Mooch" for short. Matt died on Dec. 9, 2012. As noted, Matt's priestly ministry was spent at ND, with a one-year hiatus at the University of Portland from 1962-1963.

Rev. Thomas C. Tallarida, C.S.C., was the next man to be called home, on Jan. 5 of this year. Tom was another man who served at Notre Dame in various capacities and he also spent many years in high school education.

And finally, on Jan. 18, it was the turn of **Rev. Charles A. Delaney C.S.C.**, to make the journey home. Carlos spent nearly all his priestly ministry in Santiago, Chile. His life was dedicated to the poor in the *barrios*, to those suffering from addictions and to orphans.

Now I have a question for all you bird-lovers out there: What is it with the robins this year? The other day I looked up from the computer monitor and saw five fluffed-up robins and a starling on my windowsill. It was

a bitterly cold day and they were half-buried in the snow accumulation on the sill; it probably kept them warmer. Earlier in January, I saw a couple robins in the neighborhood of some trees with red berries on them. That was easy to figure out: They'd eat the berries, the berries would ferment in their stomachs and they would be very happy birds!

Anyway, the next *Links* will come in Spring. Until then, I pray that you will cherish and take full advantage of the graces of Lent, followed by the joy of Easter.

Much love

Fr. Herb

☺ Hugs!

FILLING THE EMPTINESS WITHIN

I'm writing this the day after Notre Dame's crushing loss to Alabama in the BCS Championship. It's 11 a.m., and Mass has been finished for a half-hour. Earlier this morning, when I first looked at the Scripture Readings for the day (I John 4:7-10 and Mark 6:34-44) I had to smile. They tied in perfectly with what I was feeling and no doubt what others were feeling. John speaks of how much God has loved us and continues to love us. The Gospel is Mark's version of the feeding of the 5,000. In the homily I tied together the ND loss with God's abiding love and with Jesus' feeding of the crowd. Even as I spoke, it occurred to me that this might be a good reflection for the Easter newsletter.

Of course, the football loss *must* be kept in perspective. As I write this, war, famine, poverty and violence continue to afflict our world. People we love are dying and new life is being born into the world. The school children of Newtown are still very much a part of our individual and national consciousness. Congress once again showed a total lack of political courage by punting the financial football down the calendar, thus prolonging a national cynicism and uneasiness about our future. By the time you read this, they'll be at it again. God alone knows what will happen in your life and mine between now and the time you hold this newsletter in your hands.

So what was I feeling earlier this morning? Pretty much what every ND fan was feeling: utterly blah. We wanted an ND victory because it would have been a supreme feel-good moment. It would have left us very, very satisfied, much as the crowd was filled after their little banquet catered by Jesus. Instead, the return to glory that fans yearned for wasn't there. So there's an empty feeling. It got even emptier a few days later when news broke that Coach Kelly was talking to the Eagles.

But there is a lesson in this: We are a hungry people. At different times in our lives, we all experience an intense hunger, a deep emptiness

within, and we yearn to have it filled. In one way or another we say: "I really really want this!" or "I desperately desire that"

When one is physically hungry, the symptoms are right there. The stomach feels empty, muscles go weak, one can become sleepy. If it goes on long enough, a blistering headache will come and one feels faint.

When the spirit and heart are malnourished, when the inner hunger is not dealt with, it's not so obvious at first. Usually the first sign that something is wrong within are the different ways we start to medicate ourselves. Maybe we'll medicate with actual medicines or with alcohol, food, drugs, gambling, superficial relationships and sex or shopping expeditions. Others will do anything to avoid being alone, even to the point of suffocating family or friends with their neediness or possessiveness. Electronics are a widespread medication: endless hours playing computer games, surfing the Internet or watching TV.

But those only go so far. Sooner or later, if the hungry emptiness is not faced, other symptoms will arise – anger, irritability, exasperation, depression, discouragement, despondency, bitterness, hatred, resentment, self-pity, hopelessness, paranoia, envy, jealousy, family conflict, arguing and so on.

So what are some of our hungers?

A major one is to believe that life is meaningful and has a purpose. Whether we be young or old, we all have a deep need to know that our life does make a difference, first to our families and loved ones and then to the wider world. Another way of saying this is to point to our need for appreciation and love. Here at St. Paul's Retirement Community, for example, I see a striking difference between those who are in frequent contact with their families and those who are alone in the world or whose families don't care. The latter are withdrawn and don't mingle; the others are outgoing and lively. Without something to live for, we wither.

Closely related to this is the need to be heard. How do I know when I'm making a difference? When I'm being heard ... when I'm being taken seriously ... when I'm asked "What do you think?" or "How do you feel about that?" Being heard and taken seriously is a tremendous affirmation of our value. Absent this affirmation, there will inevitably be violence. Stop and think about that for a moment. Let your mind range over the international scene, the national scene, the Church, the local community, the home. Draw your own conclusions ... it seems to me they are pretty obvious. When individuals or peoples feel they are not being heard, some kind of violence isn't far away.

That brings up the next hunger – for community. None of us is meant to be alone. We need others to help us become fully human, fully the person God wants us to be.

Now when I speak of needing others, or community, I'm not talking about virtual community. I'm talking about communion: face-to-face and heart-to-heart contact. One of the saddest and most tragic ironies of our age is that never before in history have we had so many ways of being in contact with each other, yet opportunities for real communion with other people are eroding. The last few weddings I've done, I've made a joke about the bride and groom texting their vows to each other. It brings a laugh every time, but it does point to a sad reality. Next time you are eating out, look around you and see how many tables there are where one person is doing something with the phone and the dinner companion is sitting silently. Or look at the families where Mom and Dad are talking, but the kids are buried in their smartphones, texting friends. They're starving their hearts to death.

Inner hunger is a given in human experience. For some it lasts a lifetime; for others it's a shorter time. Sometimes it's sharp and acute, but more often it's abiding and chronic. As noted above, there are many ways we try to deal with it. There was a time

in my life when I needed some counseling to help me face the emptiness and accept it, to not fight it. The more I fought it, the worse it got. Eventually I came to the insight that a very simple form of prayer is really helpful.

There are three little phrases that form most of my prayer. By far the most frequent is "Thank you, Father." I thank Him for this particular blessing I just saw, felt, heard, received, experienced, enjoyed. This ties into that First Reading I mentioned at the beginning: No matter what may be happening in our lives, God is there. No matter what we feel about ourselves, God is there with total love. No matter how alone we are, God is there ... with blessing upon blessing upon blessing. God has a passionate desire for our well-being and the only thing that will interfere with that desire is our refusal to believe it and accept it. But even then, God's passionate desire remains and awaits a time when we are so totally empty and hungry that we have no other recourse but to turn to God.

And that's where my second little prayer comes in. It takes two versions, depending on what I'm feeling at the moment. It can be "Father, fill my emptiness." Or it can be, "Jesus, help me." Note that I am keeping it as open-ended as possible. I'm not telling God how to fill me or help me. If I do that, it may short-circuit the prayer because I'll be asking for something God can't give because he knows it would do no good or be counter-productive. Keeping it to a simple plea for help lets God do what is necessary. After all, God does know what I need long before I do! It may not happen right away, but God will respond, just as Jesus responded to the hunger of the crowd in the Gospel.

Another way to deal with the emptiness is to reach out to others. In other words, if you want life for yourself, give life to another. It is surreal to see how well this works. To feed the hunger of others, no matter what kind of hunger it may be, is to eat fully of the banquet of the Kingdom of Heaven, here and now.