



News around the Province and Beyond



The Provincial and Custodial Assistants for the MI in the English-speaking Conventual Franciscan Federation convened in Ellicott City on 15th October with Fr. James, who is the CFF liaison to the MI. Assembled were: Tom Czeck (SJC), Jobe Abbass (OLA), Waclaw Sokolowski (SMK), John Grigus (SB), and James. The OLC Assistant for the MI, John-Raphael Hadnagy, was unable to attend because of weekend parish duties. The meeting focused upon a review of all the documents of the Order pertinent to the MI, and the documents of the MI pertinent to the Order. The job description of the MI Assistant was elaborated, various strategic initiatives shared, and plans made for further collaboration. The day included a visit to the OLA Province Archives, where they viewed some of the Province's Polish and Kolbean patrimony.

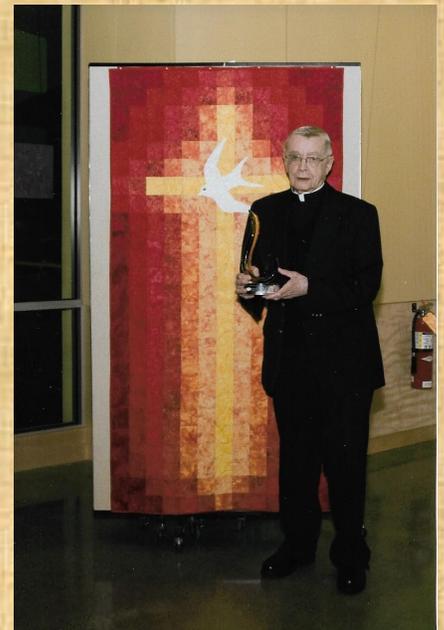




Father Allen wrote: "On September 2, six of the CCD teachers from St. Francis Korean Catholic Center in Torrance came to Pismo Beach to celebrate their old chaplain's 44th anniversary of Ordination. It was terrific to see them and catch up."
Sam Lee, Hannah Kang, Lilyann Yoon, Dorothy Lee, Eliza Lee, Estelle Lee.

Lumen Christi Award

On Friday, May 27th, **Father Ronald**, a graduate of Cathedral High School (Class of '50) was the recipient of the school's "Lumen Christi" award. The award recognizes "individuals who live and practice the core values of Cathedral School. These values include faith, respect, prayer, honesty, responsibility, compassion, service, and excellence. Award recipients demonstrate through the patterns of their lives a commitment to these values, and they show a willingness to share the light of Christ with others by their lived example." **Congratulations, Father Ronald!**



L-R: Fr. Andrew Ricci, Cathedral Rector, Fr. Ronald Olson, and Bishop James Powers, Bishop of Superior, WI

Ongoing Formation

11 Things You Need to Know About Emotional Health

Our emotional health matters as much as our spiritual health.

By Frank Powell

October 18, 2016

How is it someone can be a Christian and not look much at all like Jesus?

Undoubtedly you've seen this.

Controlling and manipulative pastors. Elders who gossip, rant and lose their cool. Christians more materialistic than their non-Christian neighbor. Christ-following people who believe they must fix and change everyone around them. Parents who helicopter over their kids, drawing meaning and identity from them.

I was that Christian.

My spiritual discipline game was tight. I read the Bible and prayed everyday. But I was filled with anxiety and fear, my mood often unpredictable. Several months ago, I discovered something that started me on a journey towards a more healthy, Christ-centered life. I realized I was emotionally immature. Even though I knew the Bible well, prayed often and valued Christ-centered community, I was emotionally an infant.

And, as Peter Scazzero writes in his book *Emotionally Healthy Spirituality*, "It is impossible to be spiritually mature while remaining emotionally immature."

Bold statement? Yes. Overkill? Not in my opinion. In recent years, authors like Daniel Goleman and Travis Bradberry have awakened millions to the benefits of emotional maturity, connecting it to everything from healthy relationships to success in the workplace. In fact, Goleman says (or EQ – emotional quotient) is more important than God-given intelligence (IQ), accounting for 90 percent of what moves people up the ladder.

So, what is emotional maturity?

In short, emotional maturity is the ability to identify and manage your emotions, as well as the emotions of others.

This, I believe, is a missing component of spiritual formation in the American church. A big one. Fortunately, emotional maturity isn't fixed. We can grow and become more compassionate, self-controlled spouses, parents, leaders and people.

Emotionally mature Christians rise above the tit-for-tat, give-and-take, "you scratch my back, I'll scratch yours" culture where so many are content to live.

But until we understand why we're anxious and fearful, until we can predict situations where we feel anxious and fearful, until we can separate emotions from logic, we will be enslaved to our emotions. I'm still a long way from emotional maturity. But for the first time in my life, I have a picture of what it looks like.

Here are 11 qualities of an emotionally mature Christian.

1. They accept others without trying to fix or change them.

Several months ago, my family returned from Disney World to a loud sound in the laundry room. Turns out the basement was filled with a foot of water.

We called a plumber who said he charged \$75 just to walk in the door. I said no thanks rather jerkishly. And I didn't feel bad. Then I proceeded to fix the problem myself.

Two days later, after hours of digging, cutting and other plumbing stuff, I fixed the problem. The rush I felt afterward was similar to the time I bought my first new car. I sent pictures to everyone, letting them know I, Frank Powell, fixed this problem.

Fixing stuff is intoxicating. So is fixing people. But it's not healthy.

Emotionally mature Christians don't view people as projects. They don't need their spouse to be some idealized portrait of masculinity or femininity. They don't need their next-door neighbor to change his ways before inviting him over for dinner.

They understand God doesn't need divine plumbers. So they resolve to leave the fixing to God and spend more time listening than talking.

2. They embrace change.

Change really is the only constant. Emotionally mature Christians aren't anxious or fearful of this reality. To them, change is neither the enemy nor the secret weapon for success. It just is.

People resist change for two reasons: fear and control. Emotionally mature Christians see through the facades of fear, and they know control of anything is largely an illusion.

They prepare for change. They adapt, step into fear and leave the control thing for God.

3. They give without expecting anything in return.

Emotionally mature Christians rise above the tit-for-tat, give-and-take, "you scratch my back, I'll scratch yours" culture where so many are content to live.

Emotionally mature Christians never lose sight of their fallible, limited nature.

They give of themselves without logging their work for future leverage. They remove household duties from their spouse without expecting her to approve the boys' golf weekend.

When you give expecting in return—whether you state it explicitly or you mentally log it until "an opportune time"—you're enslaved to the receiver and the receiver's response. Emotionally mature Christians aren't emotionally enslaved to anyone.

4. They resist immediate gratification.

Emotionally mature Christians don't eliminate the anxieties and tensions of life. That's impossible. They learn, by leaning on the cross, to hold these anxieties without running to a quick fix.

Almost all addictions are the product of our inability to manage our emotions, particularly the uncomfortable ones (stress, anxiety and the like). Having struggled with a porn addiction, I know this to be true. Porn was my release from stressful times. When tragic events come, we look for an immediate release. Rather than manage the pain, we often turn to sex, drugs, shopping, food or alcohol.

Emotionally mature Christians don't believe in quick fixes. They don't waste time looking for an immediate release, "get rid of your uncomfortable emotions quick" scheme.

They wait patiently. They lean into God. They feel stress and anxiety, but they don't allow these emotions to call the shots. And they trust God will transform the discomfort and pain, as he did on the cross.

5. They're not perfectionists.

Perfectionism clothes itself in a more desirable virtue, excellence.

Emotionally mature Christians know perfection is impossible and quite toxic to pursue.

How do you know if you're a perfectionist? Here's how: Regardless of what you accomplish, you're left with a nagging **sense of failure**; you're **impatient with others** and rarely celebrate their success; you can't recognize small wins; you can't relax or play; and you often micro-manage and go behind people to make sure things meet your standard.

Emotionally mature Christians never lose sight of their fallible, limited nature. They celebrate small victories and they're okay with mistakes. They work hard, but they also play and rest hard.

6. They don't play the victim card.

As long as I can remember, I've used the victim card to buy attention and power. My situation was always "their" fault. By "their" I mean anybody or anything but the man in the mirror.

But the victim card never tells you the only thing that will transform your life: You're the problem, and your life will change when you take control of your actions.

Emotionally mature Christians undoubtedly hear the lies of victimhood, but they don't listen. They believe life is a choice. They take control of their actions. Real power is found here because people and circumstances don't impact their joy and peace.

7. They receive criticism without becoming defensive.

Emotionally mature Christians know themselves, their strengths and weaknesses. They also know their gifts, the unique ways God wired them to serve the world. Criticism, therefore, doesn't wreck them, nor is it a personal attack.

Unless you know who you are, and find your identity in God, criticism will impact you—almost always negatively—because you're tied to opinions of others.

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8. They aren't easily offended.

Immature Christians are fixated on being right, acquiring success, looking good and stealing the spotlight. They need an enemy because they find meaning in winning battles and proving others wrong.

Because of this, they're highly sensitive to opposing views, quick to throw up walls and live a reactionary existence.

Emotionally mature Christians, however, are nearly un-offendable. Filled with empathy for their neighbor, emotionally mature Christians focus more on loving and listening than convincing and correcting.

9. They believe God loves them for who they are, not what they do.

Emotionally immature Christians teeter on the edge of burnout and believe God honors such a thing. They say yes to everyone and would probably look down on a Christian who thinks otherwise. In general, their view of God and God's view of them depends on how much they do.

Emotionally mature Christians embrace a slower version of Christian living, believing God cares more about who they are than what they do. They know their limitations, and they've moved past trying to save the world.

They're patient and hopeful, motivated by love to serve others. But they don't allow their works for God to outweigh their time with God.

10. They don't use absolutes or see the world as "black and white."

Emotionally mature Christians don't need the world to make sense. They don't need to know where everyone stands. They paint the world gray, and rarely use absolutes like "never," "always," and "The Bible clearly says ..."

Absolutes help immature Christians compress the world to a manageable size, one that's both safe and void of unknown.

They circle the wagons around familiarity and comfort because, God help us, the world is scary and falling apart. They're always under the assumption that the presence of evil is stronger today than any other period in history, and the return of Jesus is imminent.

Emotionally mature Christians, however, avoid drawing lines and aren't afraid to say "I think" or "I believe." They embrace the unknown, trusting God to fill in the voids. And their hopeful perspective, both internally and socially, keeps them from seeing a "doom and gloom" world.

11. They step into conflicts and resolve them in a healthy way.

Emotionally mature Christians resist labeling conflict as “bad.” It’s hard, of course, but it’s not bad. “Fight or flight”—the way most respond to conflict—doesn’t solve conflict, resulting instead in emotional outbursts or a “head in the sand, conflict doesn’t exist because I don’t see it” perspective (which usually only creates more conflict).

Many Christians, myself included, equate peace and unity with conflict avoidance, which bucks against the ministry of Jesus. “Sweeping stuff under the rug” doesn’t make conflict go away, and it’s certainly not Christian.

Emotional maturity says you can deal with conflict in a way that brings both resolution and growth for both sides. But doing so requires empathy (an awareness of the other person’s feelings and situation), being in control of your emotions and a focus on resolving rather than winning.

Emotional maturity is not only important for spiritual growth and maturity, it’s essential. God designed us with emotions. They’re an important component of our humanity, but they shouldn’t impact our decision-making.

Sister Death

We received word the other day that Gerry Downs, familiar to many of the friars who lived in Berkeley and San Pablo, has passed away. Please keep her and her family in your prayers.