



Boston Catholic Journal



NIHIL NISI IESUM

Dedicated to Mary, Mother of God

Salus Animarum Suprema Lex Esto (Canon Law 175)

The Salvation of Souls is the Supreme Law in the Church

How much is enough?



We love people

Occasionally we *even* give them some money ... or clothes that we no longer want and would not be caught dead in; gifts (the least expensive possible, or better yet, those that had been given us that we consider useless or worthless and save for the

occasion when a gift will be required of us ... *or which we were ready to throw out anyway*).

We give them much advice — in this regard we are unstinting and most generous.

We are less generous with our time; we express appropriate sadness and compassion but we invest nothing of ourselves in it; we are quick to empathize but quicker still to forget ... and we assiduously avoid the deeply needy.

We write out checks, tear them off and post them to some poor child in an impoverished country — and never remember their name ... only the deep, almost sensual sense of satisfaction that we are *so* good, *so* generous, *so* loving of ... “what’s her name ...?”

We give far, far less of *ourselves*, for that is the most valuable commodity of all ...

Even ... *even* if we give extravagantly of our money, generously in our time, amply of ourselves — the Saints and Church Fathers remind us of the greatest gift of all (and it is *not* ourselves ... sorry): **The gift of God.** We hear an echo of this in St. Paul:

“And if I should distribute all my goods to feed the poor, and if I should deliver my body to be burned, and have not love, it profits me nothing.” (I Cor. 13.3)

We keep our money from the poor at the peril of our souls (and we *all* have excuses ...), we give our refuse to Christ when we toss our useless clothing to the poor; we give “wise” counsel to the needy, but no bread. In a rare paroxysm of magnanimity we even give ourselves!

But do we give *God*? Do we give Him Who is most necessary to us, Who loves us above the loves of all others? We are made in His image. We *can*. We *can* be the face, the hand, the voice, of Jesus Christ to our brother, our sister, needy or not – all cry out for Him in the dark watches of the nights that leach into our lives from every shadow ... sickness, loneliness, grief, death ...

Your money, your clothing, your checks, will never bring them solace ... they will only find it in the face of God ... and you alone can bring it.

Imagine ... you can!

The two words — *Jesus Christ* — are the most beautiful in the world! **And you are ashamed to utter them ... to give God to the world...?** Jesus spoke of those who are ashamed of Him in this world ... or perhaps you have forgotten?

“For whoever is ashamed of Me and of My words, of him will the Son of Man be ashamed when He comes in His glory and the glory of the Father and of the holy angels.” (St. Luke 9.26)

"Whoever denies Me before men, I will also deny him before My Father in Heaven.” (St. Matthew 10.33)

Quite a sobering thought — no? In fact, it should *literally* “scare the Hell out of you!”

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