

RECEPTION THAT NEVER WAS

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Intent of these jottings

- ✓ *To become conscious of our motivation in doing our duties*
- ✓ *To function in life like grown-ups, not like children.*
- ✓ *To realize that actions done out of compulsion, fear, or only because of liking have no real value.*
- ✓ *To find meaning in our daily living*

A Story

The skies grew dark, midday turned night, the gale blew, the clouds broke loose and a deluge flooded the earth. The waters of the river swelled, the city became a lake, and people in a panic flew.

Then one of the citizens fell into the swirling waters. He was getting drowned. Pitifully, he cried for help. People from the banks watched helplessly. No one could summon the courage to plunge into the swollen river and save him. Then, all of a sudden, a courageous young man jumped into the turbulent waters. There was a hush among the bystanders.

The savior came close to the drowning man. Holding each other they strove to keep afloat. To their good luck, the current brought down a log of wood. Both of them clung to it for dear life. People held their breath. Then, on the nick of time, the fire brigade reached the spot. With difficulty they managed to bring both men from sure death to life. As our men reached the bank, there was a sigh of relief and thunderous clap.

Some weeks later, the Mayor of the town called for a Civic Reception to honor the man who risked his life to save one of his fellow citizens. The Town Corporators and other dignitaries were present at the reception. The Mayor gave a vibrant speech praising the courageous hero who displayed such great valor and love for his neighbor.

Then he called the hero to the mike. Before garlanding him, the Mayor interviewed him before the large audience. “My dear friend”, he asked, “could you tell us what gave you the courage to jump into a sure death to save an unknown citizen?” The savior hesitated for a while and fumbling for words replied: “Sir, would you mind if honestly I tell the whole truth?” “Of course,” the Mayor said, “We shall be pleased to hear you”.

Then, the savior with a grimace in his face and in a sarcastic voice said: “Well, then, actually speaking, I did not jump into the water. Some bastard in the crowd pushed me from behind into the river!”

POINTS FOR REFLECTION AND DISCUSSION

1. When can an action be called heroic and meritorious?
2. Do deeds and duties performed out of compulsion, fear or under duress have any value? Why?
3. Can we please God when we serve him out of fear and obligation, like going for Sunday Mass and performing other religious duties for fear of eternal damnation? Why?
4. Then, what should we do? To stop performing our religious duties? Or, is there not a better way out of it? Which? How?
5. Can you explain the difference between doing things:
Because:
 - ✓ We **like** doing them?
 - ✓ We **have to** do them?
 - ✓ We **need** do them?
 - ✓ We have a **will** to do them?
6. Can we bring ourselves freely and joyfully to do the things that need be done? How?
7. How to motivate ourselves and others to do willingly what is compulsory?

Explain the following sentences:

- If we cannot do what we like, we should bring ourselves to like what we do.
- Doing things only because we like them is childish.
- Willingly, doing what I need do is a sign of maturity.
- Not all we want, we need.
- Wanting to do all we need and musts is the hallmark of maturity.
- Liking, easily creates imaginary – false - needs and wants.
- The insidiousness of advertising lays in the fact that creates needs out of likes.

- Doing freely what we need and what we ought to do is only worthy of praise
- Doing things only because you like them is childish.

QUESTIONS FOR PERSONAL REFLECTION.:

Why was I baptized? Was I not pushed from the back into the water?

Why do I go for mass, confession, communion, etc? Am I not pushed?

Why do I pray? Because, I want? I must? I need? I like? I am forced?

Why am I Christian?

Check your daily routine from morning to night: Why are you doing all you do? Why? Why?

It is time for you to jump into the water on your own!

Its time for you to take our life in your hands and start doing things on your own!

Are we not pushing others, one another, our children our pupils from their backs?

It is time for us to motivate ourselves and function as free autonomous beings not robot-like.

It's time also for us to motivate those under us – our children, partners, students, etc. - to jump into the water on their own.