

Dear Padre,

The new priest assigned to our parish seldom shakes hands at the sign of peace during Mass. Isn't he supposed to?

You may be surprised to know that the *General Instruction of the Roman Missal* (154) calls for the priest to remain in the sanctuary at the sign of peace to avoid disrupting the assembly's exchange. He has the option of exchanging a sign of peace with the ministers—it's optional because to do so repeats the first greeting of peace he just extended to everyone in the assembly.

In the United States, an exception is made for special occasions such as weddings, funerals, or when community leaders are present. In those cases, the *GIRM* allows the priest to offer the sign of peace to people sitting near the sanctuary.

Ironically, many parishioners view the presider's participation less as a distortion of the rite than as a positive indicator of their priest's social skills, as in "Father is such a people person!"

Offering—and being offered—an actual sign of Christ's peace during Mass is intended to be poignant, prayerful, and powerful, with a different kind of fanfare than when greeters welcome worshipers before Mass or when the presider shakes hands and socializes immediately after Mass.

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A WORD FROM Pope Francis

The quest for personal prestige can become a spiritual malady masquerading itself even behind good intentions: for example, when behind the good that we do and preach, we are only seeking ourselves and our own affirmation—that is, getting ahead and climbing up.

ANGELUS, OCTOBER 17, 2021



Our Parish Community

July 31, 2022

Eighteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time (C)

Ecc1 1:2; 2:21–23

Col 3:1–5, 9–11

Lk 12:13–21

Was It Worth It?

We hear many stories about women and men who value things or status over the people in their lives or over genuine fulfillment. Then something happens that throws them back on their heels and they are forced to face the question: Was it worth it? No, say the writers of today's readings. It is not worth losing yourself or the people you love. In fact, it is not worth risking your own integrity.

The Hebrew word for *vanity* can be translated as "worthless" or "foolish." The characters in the first reading and the Gospel passage were considered foolish because the labors and possessions that wore them down were ultimately worthless.

This idea of vanity or foolishness is a prominent theme in the Wisdom tradition. We all know that actions have consequences. It's these consequences that reveal what is good for us and what is not, what is

worth pursuing and what we should avoid. Those who learn from life experiences in this way are considered wise; those who don't are deemed foolish. We all know this; we have learned the truth of it from our own experience.

There is one more aspect that must be considered in making wise decisions. Which consequences are worth the effort we put into achieving them? Are we looking for short-term enjoyment or do we seek long-term satisfaction? The profit attained by the people in these readings did not last. They couldn't take it with them, so one might ask: Was it worth it?

Sr. Dianne Bergant, CSA

FOR Reflection

- ✦ Think about the effort you put into achieving something. Was it worth it?
- ✦ If not, what can you do to change this?



FREEDOM STUDIO/SHUTTERSTOCK

What profit comes to mortals from all the toil and anxiety of heart with which they toil under the sun? ...Even at night their hearts are not at rest.

ECCLESIASTES 2:22, 23