

FROM THE PASTOR'S DESK

THREE STEPS TO HEAVEN...

I'm really a big fan of oldies music from the 1950's and 60's. In my opinion, that music is infinitely better than what the kids listen to today, if you can even call it music! Besides hundreds of old 45 RPM records which I have collected over the years, someone sent recently me a wonderful collection of oldies on two CD's which were wonderfully restored and remastered. No scratchy noises like on the 45's!

Most of the songs on the CD I recognized. However, one of them I did not. The song had an interesting title: "Three Steps to Heaven." Guess you see why it got my attention right away! The song which reached the top of the charts in the United States in 1960 was sung by Eddie Cochran who died a tragic death.

In the song, Eddie Cochran sang about how to achieve eternal happiness in three steps. The three steps are: Find a girl. Get her to fall in love with you. Make her feel loved! Not a bad synopsis if you are interested in romance but probably too old fashioned and slow in today's society!

Taking that song title and applying it to our own lives, what would be the three steps to heaven for us as Catholics? Well here they are: Mass and Holy Communion every Sunday, going to confession on a regular basis and finally, praying the holy rosary. Let's look at each of these three steps for a moment.

The Sunday Mass is extremely important for us as Catholics. The Lord asks us for only one hour out of 168 in a week. Certainly that is not asking too much. How much time we all waste on the internet, watching TV, shopping and other activities! Let's try to give God his due. A priest once said, "If you are too busy to go to Mass, you're probably too busy!"

Of course at Mass, we receive Jesus Christ in holy communion which is the greatest privilege that we have. The Lord becomes our very food and spiritual nourishment. Cut off from the life giving bread of the eucharist, our soul will wither and die. Mass and holy communion is truly our "passport to paradise." It is the first and most important step in getting closer to God.

Secondly, going to penance. We live in an age where everybody's sins and failings are trumpeted throughout the cyber world and across the media. Instead of focusing on other peoples bad behavior, maybe all of us need to look within and see those areas in life where we could do better and be better as Christians. Confession gives us that opportunity.

When we sincerely confess our sins, some important things happen. Our conscience is purified, grace is increased, the will is strengthened, we grow in virtue, humility grows and our bad habits are corrected. Going to the Sacrament of Reconciliation can assist us in living a good Christian life which is really tough in the world that is "2018."

Finally, the third step to heaven is to pray the rosary if we can each and every day. The month of October that we are now in is dedicated to Mary and the rosary. Padre Pio was once asked by one of his fellow confreres, "Father can you give me a short cut to reach God?" The saint replied, "The short cut is the Blessed Virgin Mary and her most powerful prayer the rosary!" The rosary keeps us connected with Jesus and his mother, and we need that kind of connection much more than Twitter, Instagram or Facebook! Even if you don't like old songs, you can still follow these "Three Steps to Heaven" which will lead you someday to true happiness and joy!

*Sincerely in Christ,
Father Jerome*