

January 16, 2021

Since the last time we met, much has happened in our country that could easily fill me with frustration, anger, discouragement, and even dread. Our nation has elected leaders who have consistently voted to disregard the rights of the unborn and promote the most radical abortion agenda ever seen in America. We have given power to those who have worked to suppress religious freedom, limit the practice of our faith, curtail our Catholic schools, hospitals, adoption services, and silence the authentic Catholic voice. They have hindered our access to full knowledge of events and have distorted the facts to support their preferred narrative. It would seem that there is ample reason for each one of us to be alarmed. So, why am I not in despair?

Several thoughts have been going through my mind in the past few weeks. The first is how Satan tempts us with things that appear good and beautiful. Listen to the words in Genesis describing Eve's temptation: "the woman saw that the fruit of the tree was good for food and pleasing to the eye, and also desirable for gaining wisdom." (Genesis 3:6) We have become a nation that has been seduced by things that appear wonderful. The things that people want today—freedom, peace, happiness, love, opportunity, wealth—are all good and desirable. But just like the forbidden fruit that was good for food, pleasing to the eye, and desirable for gaining wisdom, we are being asked to step outside God's will to get them. That is the snare of Satan. It was the step which brought Adam and Eve into the slavery of sin, and it is also where secular progressives are leading our nation today.

St. Paul wrote, "For since the creation of the world, God's invisible qualities—his eternal power and divine nature—have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that people are without excuse. For although they knew God, they neither glorified him as God nor gave thanks to him, but their thinking became futile and their foolish hearts were darkened. Although they claimed to be wise, they became fools " (Romans 1:20-22) After giving a scathing list of sins (which aptly describes our culture today), St. Paul concluded, "Although they know God's righteous decree that those who do such things deserve death, they not only continue to do these very things but also approve of those who practice them." (Romans 1:32)

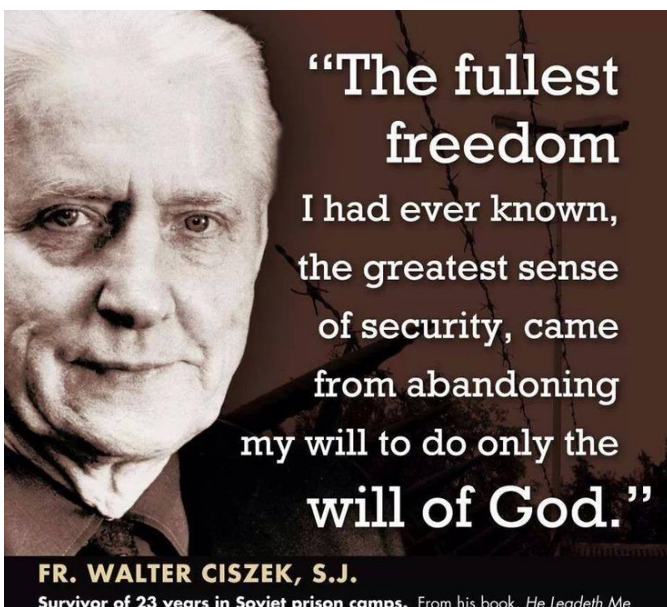
I want to remind you today that these alarming events have not taken God by surprise. There is comfort in knowing that, even though we often cannot discern fake news from real news, "God's truth is marching on." With confidence that God's plan cannot be thwarted, I can rest content with the faith which St. John Newman articulated in the hymn,

"Lead, Kindly Light": "I do not ask to see/ The distant scene— one step enough for me." Nor do I need to search out prophecies of the end times, for whether He comes tomorrow or in another 2000 years, my marching orders depend on only one question: What is God's will for my life right now?

True freedom is found only within the will of God. So hang on to the things you absolutely know are God's will.

***I will walk about in freedom,
for I have sought out your precepts.*** (Psalm 119:45)

God has called us not to be successful, but to be faithful. (St. Teresa of Calcutta)



Colossians 3

1 Since, then, you have been raised with Christ, set your hearts on things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. 2 Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things.

3 For you died, and your life is now hidden with Christ in God. 4 When Christ, who is your life, appears, then you also will appear with him in glory.

5 Put to death, therefore, whatever belongs to your earthly nature: sexual immorality, impurity, lust, evil desires and greed, which is idolatry. 6 Because of these, the wrath of God is coming.

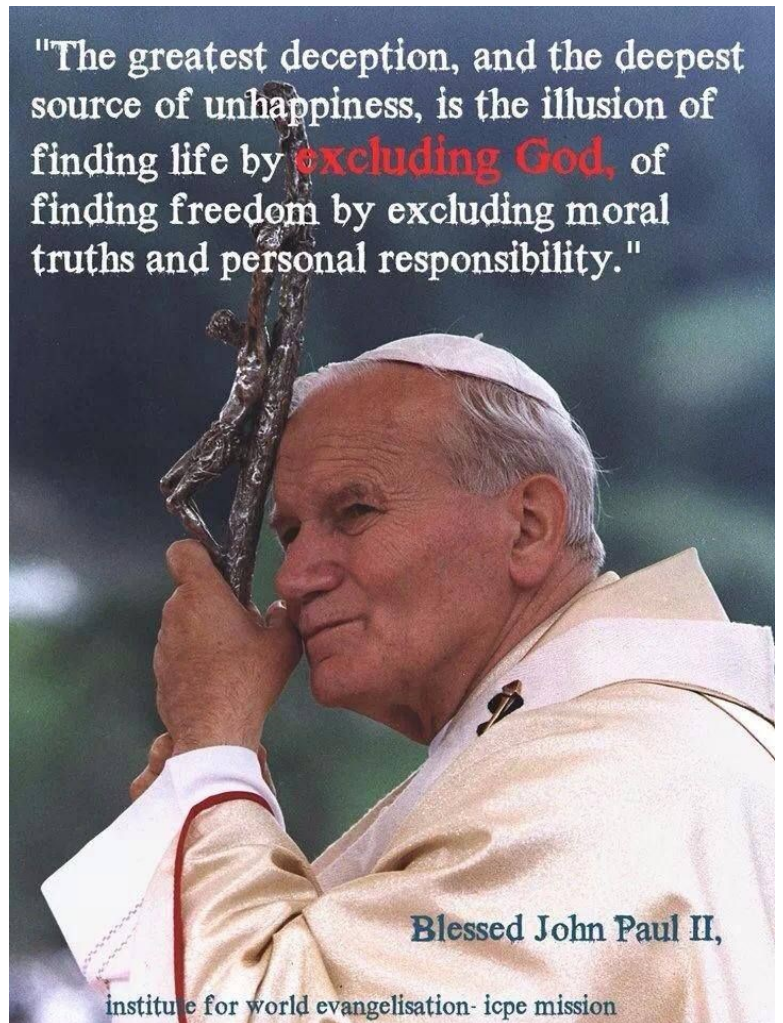
7 You used to walk in these ways, in the life you once lived. 8 But now you must also rid yourselves of all such things as these: anger, rage, malice, slander, and filthy language from your lips.

9 Do not lie to each other, since you have taken off your old self with its practices 10 and have put on the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge in the image of its Creator.

11 Here there is no Gentile or Jew, circumcised or uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave or free, but Christ is all, and is in all.

12 Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. 13 Bear with each other and forgive one another if any of you has a grievance against someone. Forgive as the Lord forgave you.

14 And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity. 15 Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, since as members of one body you were called to peace. And be thankful.



The will, therefore, is then truly free, when it is not the slave of vices and sins. Such was it given us by God; and this being lost by its own fault, can only be restored by Him who was able to at first to give it.

-St. Augustine

Eucharistic Virtue



16 Let the message of Christ dwell among you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom through psalms, hymns, and songs from the Spirit, singing to God with gratitude in your hearts.

17 And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.