

IS THE CHANGING WORLD....CHANGING YOU?

It seems the world is changing so fast. Just in the last month or so, there were several ISIS terrorist attacks – in Nice, France, Turkey airport, and many other places. Police have been targeted and killed in Dallas and Louisiana. A Catholic Priest was martyred during Mass at the Altar in France by Islamic Radicals. There were two Political Conventions – Republican, Democrat. And Oh, let's not forget - "Pokemon Go" arrived on the scene recently..... the new "augmented reality" game! (which I'm not crazy about).

Anyway, there are so many things going on, and happening so fast! Beloved, the world is changing rapidly with the *modern* understanding and viewpoints of politics, technology, philosophy, secularism, religion. And I wonder, are these ideas and philosophies changing us in a good way or bad way? Are they bringing us closer to Jesus Christ, closer to Church, closer to Faith - or are they pulling us away?

Are *you* changing? Consider your own life; your family, children, relatives. Which way is the world changing them? **Are you changing toward Christ, or away?** How is the world influencing you and your loved ones around you? Certainly change is good; change is important. The question is, which direction is the change....Is the *world* changing us – or is *God* changing us? You see, allowing the world to change us is not really change – its *conforming*. It is doing, living, thinking the way it wants you to live.

But our Faith teaches us, "**Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind.**" (Rom. 12:2) The fact is that as Christians we should be changing all the time....but not allowing the *world* change us and influence our behavior and how we think, but rather, allowing God to change and transform us every day!

And we do this – with God's help and by truly **accepting and believing in Jesus Christ** – that's the key - and, through **practicing our Faith**...called spiritual asceticism. Any musician, or artist, or athlete knows they have to *practice* in order to get better. A basketball player will certainly improve, change, get better, if he/she takes 500 jumpshots a day.....

How about in our Christian life. Imagine if we read 500 words from the Bible every day. Or if we prayed 500 seconds a day. What if we really kept count of how often we practiced our faith by coming to Liturgy on Sunday, or how many times a day we practiced patience, forgiveness and kindness toward others.

These spiritual practices truly change us, and transform us....and help us not to be conformed to this rapidly changing world, but to be transformed by the renewing of our minds – through the power and presence of Jesus Christ in our lives!

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