

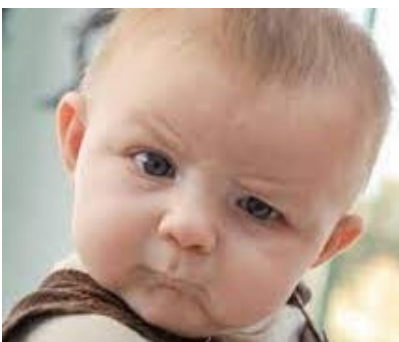
MY ENEMY'S BROTHER

Our heart workshop has tools for maintenance, to repair when there is a deterioration, to update or even to create good feelings. Sometimes we don't find the tool, or they're messy, or broken, or we need new ones that are hard to come by. We also sometimes use the wrong tool, because we think it's easier to handle. The heart workshop may be damaged, leaky, or unventilated; it may be inadequate or not always be clean. It is likely that we have had times when the workshop was "closed for holidays"... In the heart workshop there are on a daily basis hurt feelings, distrust of others, wounded pride – our ego open to ridicule - and disappointments. Very different forms, shades and perceptions.



I once heard a person tell me "Reeds become spears", referring to the great disappointment of the "friendly nullity" of who I believed was a great friend. Having lost a friendship we can come that distrust not only that person, but others that we are unsure of. *"Our heart must be cleansed, put in order and purified. Of what? Of the falsehoods that stain it, from hypocritical duplicity. All of us have these. They are diseases that harm the heart, soil our lives and make them insincere. We need to be cleansed of the deceptive securities that would barter our faith in God with passing things, with temporary advantages."* Pope Francis at Mass in Erbil, Iraq, 7 March 2021.

We hear frequently "I'm never going to forgive him that", "don't trust anyone", "think wrong and you'll get it right"... With the gospel in hand, knowing that it is a permanent call to fidelity, because Jesus, the Master, the Lord, forgave, trusted and did not have a negative feeling towards anyone, we cannot accept distrust and suspicion as a norm of life, but it is understandable because we are human beings, and not robots programmed to act in a certain way.



Many people pass through our lives, some stay, others simply pass by. Depending on where we may be and live, we see diverse human realities each day, and some of them require our attention for our work or coexistence in a common place or neighborhood, and other realities are outside our nearest day to day routine.

The areas of conflict or good understanding are variable according to our psychology, culture, age... There is a world in each of us different from that of others and, therefore, different ways of resolving or overcoming the difficulties of co-existence, family or community love, spirit of working together or the relationship of friendship.

If our life comes into conflict with one or more people, the workshop of our heart must produce a great deal of respect and responsibility, to place ourselves where we should be, with whatever dialogue is possible, understanding the reasons of others' actions, without judging them. It is better to repair than to throw away. And if we close doors, we may ourselves be locked in, with the key on the outside.

because:

when we believe that a friendship is never going to break, and it is broken.

When we stand above anyone.

When we think we are better than others.

When in life we are weighed down more by failures than triumphs.

When we consider ourselves our own enemy.

When it hurts us that there are people who do not get involved as we do.

When we're not mature enough to concede defeat,

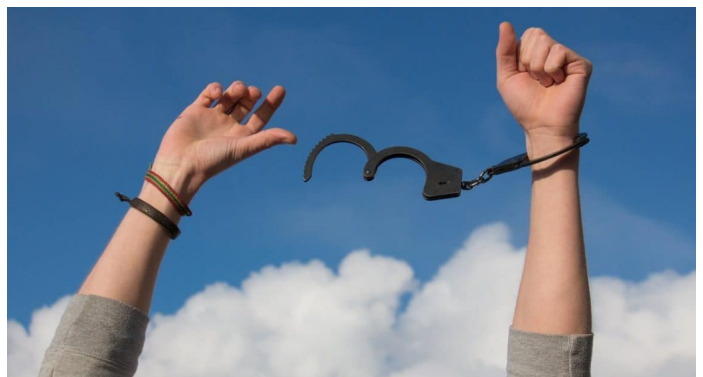
then:

let us use the tool of humility, let us look at Jesus forsaken, wounded. Pope Francis said at the Chaldean rite Mass at St. Joseph's Cathedral in Baghdad on March 6, 2021: *"If I live as Jesus asks, what do I gain? Don't I risk letting others lord it over me? Is Jesus' invitation worthwhile, or a lost cause? That invitation is not worthless, but wise."* And wisdom is the twin sister of humility.

If we find ourselves with situations in which, even having forgiven and forgotten, the workshop of our heart fails to make changes in our personal life or that of those who have moved away from our affection, from our fraternity, from our friendship and trust, from our welcome, we will feel defeat again... We cannot change others. Accepting the situation requires a degree of maturity that will leave us at peace with ourselves.

When we regarded ourselves as "prodigal sons" of our brothers, and return to where we should never have said goodbye, when the other person

was waiting for us, the workshop of the heart is free of old and useless junk, clean of the cobwebs of prejudices, letting things take their course, without victors or vanquished.



That I may be a brother to my enemy, with the inner joy not of having a quiet conscience for having done things as well as possible, but that which gives peace to the heart, that which charity and love repair, and then the joy that denotes the balance in our feelings will spring forth. A challenge, the challenge of Jesus who calls us to forgive seventy times seven and to be forgiven as many again.

Aurelio SANZ BAEZA

(Translation of Liam O`CUIV. Thank you!)

(Boletín Iesus Caritas, 210)