

Sin against Holy Spirit

In the past a great deal of time in church was paid to the notion of sin. Graphic images of the consequences of wrong doing expressed in the burning fiery furnaces of Hell.

Well it seems from the Gospel that the greatest sin, is the sin against the Holy Spirit.

So it would help to try and work out what the sin against the Holy Spirit is, in order to avoid spending eternity, being tortured in retribution.

There are of course different levels of evil. It would be wrong to dismiss the suffering created by the disciples of the Nazi creed, or the injustice created by a world trade pattern, based upon our colonial past.

However fundamentally the majority of us do not come near to such dramatic evil. We are not of such significance.

Indeed those involved in these crimes of the past were more often than not pathetic.

Hitler was a deluded fool. Stalin a man who lived in fear of those surrounding him.

In reality pathetic.

Indeed sin is pathetic

It is destructive.

It is a corrosive part of our existence.

Sin against the Holy Spirit, being the most corrosive, the most destructive part of our existence.

So let us approach the subject with suitable humility. Recognising that there is no authentic drama, or glamour in sin.

It is basically pathetic.

Many of you will already know that as a young boy I dreamed of playing centre forward for Manchester United. As I grew older, and bigger I was obliged to recognise the fact that I was not very good at the soccer. So an Old Trafford debut game, in which I scored the winning goal, would not be possible.

Not an unusual failure in life, but one which was significant to me

This was an opportunity to sin against the Holy Spirit. The creative power of God. The healing power of God.

Because I could have just given up. Cursed this same God for my lack of skill. Focused only upon my limitations and not my joys.

Turned away from the growth, and hope, and development available to me, and simply lived in a swamp of retribution and self-pity.

Thankfully God has never given up on me. The Holy Spirit never abandoned me.

Thus I have been saved from this self-destruction. From this sin against creation. From this sin against the Holy Spirit.

And there is thus Joy. The joy of running upon the moors. The joy of screaming at Ewood Park. The joy of a season ticket to watch Burnley at the Turf. The joy of the Spirit of sport

The Joy of the Holy Spirit.

You obviously know that as a Roman Catholic Priest, I am not married. I have no wife.

As a young man. I have to admit that the more gorgeous section of my age mates did not desperately seek out my attention. I shared in the struggles of youth, and confidence. How could I come to terms with my appearance, my popularity, my sexuality? I realised that I did not look like Sean Connery, or have his charisma. Failed again

This was an opportunity to sin against the creative power of the Holy Spirit.

Because I could have given up, cursed this same God for my unique nature. Focused only upon my limitations and not my joys.

Turned away from the growth and hope, and development available to me, and simply lived in a swamp of retribution and self-pity.

I wanted to be a modern St Francis of Assisi.

Failed

Never made it. The swamp of self-pity available to me.

I wanted to be given rank and success.

Failed

Never made it. The swamp of self-pity available to me.

I wanted to be always witty, healthy, wealthy, and admired.

Failed

Never made it. The swamp of self-pity available to me.

We all at times turn away from the growth, hope and development available through the loving power of the Holy Spirit.

We all at times sin against the Holy Spirit of God

Indeed at times it seems much more comfortable to sink into the swamp of self-pity.

This is the challenge.

To work with the love of the Holy Spirit or to deny it.

Becoming caught within a self-perpetuating spiral of self-destruction.

Defiant and pathetic.

I am a child of God

I am me

You are a child of God

You are you

Accept the gifts of the Holy Spirit

Accept what you are

And

Do not sin against the Holy Spirit

Accept what you are

and

Grow

Grow

Grow

Blossom.