

## Commentary on the Gospel for Mon, Oct 1st 2018

Memorial of Saint Thérèse of the Child Jesus, Virgin and Doctor of the Church

Why do bad things happen to good people? The perennial question that usually comes to mind when reading this passage from Job. This time around a different thought came to mind as I reflected on the passage. I saw it as a perfect example of Ignatian indifference.

In the First Principle and Foundation of his Spiritual Exercises, Ignatius states:

Human Beings are created to praise, reverence, and serve God our Lord, and by means of this [grow closer to God in this life and have eternal life with God]. The other things on the face of the earth are created for the human beings, to help them in working towards the end for which they are created. From this it follows that I should use these things to the extent that they help me toward my end, and rid myself of them to the extent that they hinder me. To do this. I must make myself indifferent to all created things, .... Consequently, on my own part I ought not to seek health rather than sickness, wealth rather than poverty, honor rather than dishonor, a long life rather than a short one, and so on in all other matters... Spiritual Exercises #23

A lot had been given to Job: he had a great family with many healthy children, he had wealth and prosperity and he, himself was healthy and strong to keep working and enlarging his estate. And he used it all as a means to grow in his relationship with God, he was grateful and faithful, and praised God for it. He grew closer to God. One day he lost it all: his children, his employees, his cattle, his crops, and his wealth. Still, Job never ceased to “praise, reverence and serve the Lord our God...” (cf. Spiritual Exercises #23)

“The LORD gave and the LORD has taken away;

blessed be the name of the LORD!"

Let us pray today that we grow in indifference, in the Ignatian sense, being grateful for and generous with what we have and praising God in all circumstances, in order to be free for Love.

It seems as if God is playing a betting game with Satan and Job and his family get caught in the middle. Job passes the test but lost everything in the process.

Satan's theory was that those who were faithful to God, for example Job, were those who had never been tried in any way, as if faithfulness and gratitude were a kind of quid pro quo.

Mariana Miller-Creighton University's Ministry and Christian Spirituality Programs