



WEEKLY LETTER FROM MONSIGNOR KEN

Did you ever have to deal with leaks?! Difficult and aggravating, isn't it? Of course, you have to first stop the leak, but then there is the damage that has to be repaired. As we all know too well, that's not all. You, then, must find the actual source of the leak, otherwise it will keep happening. That can be a challenge. Many times, it's the case that the source of the leak is not even near the spot where the water is appearing. The same is true for our health. True health care is not merely treating symptoms, but also discovering and addressing the root causes. Many times, because it's easier, we concentrate mostly on alleviating manifestations of a deeper problem. Treating only symptoms may bring relief and comfort, but ultimately doesn't lead to real health.

In my letter last week, I suggested for October, which is Respect Life Month, we should now and then take a step back for a broader look at things. I'm suggesting that again this week, but in a slightly different way. There are always sad and troubling events we hear about in the news. Ultimately, they are issues of life. Most recently, two such stories were the tragedy of Lindsay Clancy and the killing of her three children, and the case of rape at Cornell University. Both are and will continue to be discussed and debated. They are in the hands of the legal system.

I don't know all the facts and details about either, but I am mentioning them because I believe they are examples of "leaks." They need to be fixed, but we should also look for the source. They are symptoms to be treated, but are also indications of deeper problems of societal health.

The case of Lindsay Clancy is unimaginably tragic. I hope and pray, beyond the debate of guilt or innocence, that it will prompt an honest, thorough, and constructive discussion into mental health and medication. Indeed, how does something like this happen? Personally, I don't believe that medication solves all problems, and in some instances even appears to actually exacerbate issues. I can only say that I believe we can and must do a better job.

As far as the Cornell case, and again I don't know fully what happened, except I do know that rape is one of the worst and most heinous acts that anyone can do. What troubles me beyond this one case, is that there are many stories of unthinkable things happening on college campuses regularly. Drug use, alcohol abuse, and sexual promiscuity are often portrayed as virtually normal. At times. (I'm thinking of all those "spring break" tales) it is celebrated, even with humor. Besides being sinful, it is simply unhealthy and inhuman. I think we should be trying to create a culture in which such actions are unthinkable and unacceptable. In the case of Cornell, the woman should not have been there and the men shouldn't even be thinking of such things. Naïve? I think the world, and certainly that poor woman would be better off with some naivete. I sometimes feel as if we are a diabetic who consumes sweets all day and then runs to the doctor to get better. We promote unhealthy beliefs and actions, discourage faith and morals, and then decry the consequences. The Church is certainly imperfect, but we are about sharing Good News that promotes health, happiness, hope and life. We do have to fix leaks and we do have to treat symptoms. God bless those who work hard to do so...but, we can do better.

"I came so that they might have life and have it more abundantly." (John 10:10b)