

Choose life!

I have come that you may have life... (Jn 10:10) The Gospel calls us to fullness of life in Christ. Yet there is so much that gets in the way of us choosing and experiencing this life. We can name all sorts of sinful structures in the world that call for conversion and social change, however the choice for life is not always so obvious. Sometimes it is the small, insidious, life-sapping habits that need transforming. The 'little' choices for life taken in the privacy of our homes, as illustrated by the following story of Allan, are as much a part of conversion and social change.

I returned home around midnight after being out with friends. Not feeling particularly sleepy, I aimlessly switched on the TV and flicked the channels. A Star Trek movie was on. I remembered seeing it when it first came out on the big screen. I had enjoyed it then. I settled back to enjoy it again.

After about 15 minutes I began to feel uneasy. I had a sense that this was not the best way to spend my time. I noted the feeling and went back to watching the show. The unease continued to gnaw at me.

Now, I must admit I am a bit of Star Trek fan, but as Captain James T Kirk entered tense negotiations with Star Fleet Command, I began to negotiate with my own conscience. Why am I watching this? I asked myself. After all, I've seen the movie

before. Sure, it was good, but not that good. If I continue this way it will be 2 am by the time I get to bed. When I get up tomorrow will my life be any richer because I watched a rerun of Captain Kirk slaying aliens and saving the galaxy? I could be using this sleepless time in so many other ways. I could be reading a good book, one that's nourishing to my mind and my soul. I could be planning tomorrow's day. I could be reflecting on some aspect of my life which requires attention. I could be praying for someone who needs prayers. I could just 'sit' for a while and rest in God's love. Or I could make myself a cup of warm Milo and try to get some sleep, lest I wake up tired and cranky tomorrow. Besides, if I persist with this late night movie I will have to sit through all those adult dating ads which come on during the commercial breaks: images for the mind which are hardly healthy viewing.

The subtle futility of my current choice suddenly hit me: This is not life with a capital L. Getting sucked into watching late night TV reruns might appear to be an acceptable social past time. But as a Christian, it's not living life to the full.

Decision made. Bad luck, Captain Kirk. I switched off the television. (Allan)

Reflection

Think of one self-defeating habit which detracts from the fullness of life that Christ wants for you. Address it this Lent and celebrate your lifegiving choice at Easter. •

