

From the Desk of Father Peter

Honesty is the Soul of Acting with Integrity

How many times have we heard the saying, "Talk is cheap, it's actions that count." You and I have been hurt by promises given and broken. Some of us have been given sweet talk and words of love only later to discover that we were, in the name of love, only used. We later come to realize that there was no backbone to those words used.



To be a good Christian, honesty must be at the core of our religious expressions, particularly being honest with ourselves will help us in the formation of our faith as well as our family members. If I were asked why I am saying this, I would say that the experiences of my ministry as a priest over the years informs me to say so. As a priest, one hears a lot from people who would like to suggest how exhausted and tired the flock might be or how certain things could be done differently. Yet, very few people will like to be part of the solution when called upon. Then there are those around with great ideas who are waiting to be called upon but you, the pastoral leader, may not know them; they are just waiting to be identified. Gone are the days when so many pastoral needs were attended to by many devoted honestly to their faith, who stepped up to the plate. Today it appears as if there are more of us concerned with multiplying our activities rather than taking care of people and their encounter with God.

In the Gospel account we read last weekend, we hear the younger

brother tell his father, "Yes, I'll go and work" while the older brother said, "No, not me." Both used words contrary to their actions. Talk is cheap. The younger brother simply did not live up to his words; the older brother changed his mind. The older brother had integrity; the younger brother gave cheap, valueless words to his father while having no intention at all of working. How many of us recognize ourselves in that younger brother? We give God the words of our prayers, words we think He wants to hear from us. We may even be self-deluded when we speak them and end up feeling like we are pious and religious. On the surface we feel righteous but deep down we know full well that we are not going to follow through on those words with our deeds and actions.

Today many of us would like to tell the church what it must do or can do; like we need more people or we need more children or we need more priests to do this and that. Sometimes we blame the church for not letting us know when in fact we ourselves were absent from Church or were absent-minded in Church. We move easily from church to church for whatever reason instead of being part of the solution to building a stronger local faith community.

Christianity is a way of living our faith at home and in our surrounding world. Christianity is a way of relating to those around us, friends as well as strangers, in the way, the truth, and the life of Jesus Christ. If we are honest with others, honest with ourselves, and honest with our God, than our actions will automatically follow. Serving God must be a joy not a chore. We will live lives of sincere integrity and act accordingly if we are honest with ourselves. For those who try to do that every day, thank you for your commitment.



Peace and love to all,
Fr. Peter Enyan-Boadu