

Glory to Jesus Christ! Glory to God for *all* things!

"God, grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change, courage to change the things I can, and wisdom to know the difference: Living one day at a time, enjoying one moment at a time, accepting hardship as a pathway to peace, trusting that you will make all things right if I surrender to your will; so that I may be reasonably happy in this life and supremely happy with you, forever, in the next. Amen."

The prayer printed above, commonly known as the Serenity Prayer, has been the foundational set of God-words for millions of people recovering from alcoholism and many other addictions since 1935. It is sufficiently time-tested that we might do well to adapt it to this moment in time where we might increasingly be noticing our stressed out addiction *to ourselves*.

"What?" you say. "I'm not addicted to myself." Maybe not. But if you're as wise as I think you are, you'll consider that possibility for a moment. If you're not addicted to yourself, why do you find yourself all wrapped up in how you feel and what you think? Isn't it amazing how much of your time can be dominated by annoying, judgmental, fearful, anxious, regretful, painful, etc., thoughts and feelings regarding just about everything? Okay, to be fair, not really about everything... only about everything that affects... YOU. That's an addiction. Join the club we call the human race.

These COVID-19 days give us wonderful material to work with in our spiritual growth. As life seems more and more out of my control, I can practice working with my insistence on having things my way. That begins with making the prayer's distinction between "things I cannot change" and "things I can." That's much more difficult than it seems. That's why it takes hard times to bring me to a willingness to do the work at all. Eventually, I find out that nothing out there in life is really under my control; it only seems that way when times are good. When times get tough, I thank God, because I get to see how I *really* am and have a chance to do a little work on that; on me.

Confession is a good place to begin or continue that work. On Friday and Saturday, from 9 am to 3 pm, I will be up at church to 'hear' Confessions via FaceTime or Duo. If you call during those times, I'll answer and we can pray and do Confession. If I don't answer, that means I'm hearing a Confession and will return your Confession call in the order in which it was received.

Peace and serenity,
Fr. John

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