



THE TWELVE STEP REVIEW

Fr. Emmerich Vogt, O.P.



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Dear friends,

Many people ask for my schedule for retreats and conferences, so here is a list as I now have it:

- Nov 5-8 Mission, St. Monica, Duluth, GA
- Nov 9-11 Retreat, Casa Maria, Irondale, AL
- No. 16-18 Women's retreat, Basking Ridge, NJ
- Dec 3-6 Mission, Star of the Sea, Bremerton, WA
- Dec 10-13 Mission, St. Mary Magdalen, Everett, WA
- Dec 17-20 Mission, St. Anthony, Casa Grande, AZ
- January 25-27 Women's retreat, Casa Maria, Irondale
- Feb 4-7 Mission, San Carlos, Monterey, CA.

- Feb. 25-28 Mission, St. Brigid, Johns Creek, GA
- March 4-7 Mission, Presentation Church, Sacramento, CA
- March 11-14 Mission, St. Joseph, Long Beach, CA
- March 17-21 Mission, Corpus Christi, Portsmouth, NH *

Boundaries

The medieval city of Avila is known for its Romanesque walls. It is the largest fully illuminated monument in the world. Such walls were necessary to protect against invaders. However, it is not only cities that need proper protective boundaries, but so do persons.



The Walled City of Avila

Where you end and I begin

The Bible relates stories where consequences are set for certain behaviors and shows that it is a serious sin to trespass against others. And if it is a sin for me to trespass against you, the reverse must also be true.

Vincent Bugliosi was the prosecuting attorney in the infamous

Charles Manson murder case. He was successful in prosecuting Manson for the murders even though

Manson was not present when the murders were committed. Bugliosi notes that many judges think of themselves as "God-Almighty" in their courtrooms, and might say to him in an angry tone, "Sit down, Mr. Bugliosi." If any judge treats him in that way, he asks for a private meeting in the judge's cham-

"We change our behavior when the pain of staying the same becomes greater than the pain of changing"

Dr. Henry Cloud

bers and tells the judge that in order to do his job as prosecuting attorney for the people of Los Angeles, he needs to have credibility in the eyes of the jury; he cannot have the judge demean him in front of the jury. He politely informs the judge that if he were to do that one more time, he will get after the judge (and risk contempt) in front of the jury to show the jury he is not afraid of the judge. No judge ever did it again!

Bugliosi wrote a book called *Outrage: The Five Reasons Why O. J. Simpson Got Away with Murder*.

Continued on the back page.

INSPIRATION FROM THE SAINTS

Some years ago I met a Christian woman who had come to America from a non-Christian nation where arranged marriages were the custom. She herself was in an arranged marriage and quite happy with the man who was chosen for her. She and her husband had three daughters, all born in this country. The woman expected to arrange for her daughters to be married to men from her own clan back home. But the daughters were thoroughly Americanized, having been educated in American institutions with other Americans. In no way were they going to be involved in arranged marriages. Arranged marriages have deep roots in royal and aristocratic families both in Christian and non-Christian cultures. But in Christian cultures the custom waned as young people sought their own choices not only for marriage but also for lifestyle. Some suffered death in what we might call their need to set boundaries in order to do God's will. We see this in the lives of various Saints who chose to do what they considered God's will as against their parents' wishes. Here are some Saints who followed the path they felt God had chosen for them.

- **Saint Thomas Aquinas** was born in 1225 to an aristocratic family who chose military careers for Thomas' older brothers, and for Thomas the life of a monk in a prestigious Benedictine Abbey where, it was hoped, he would follow in the footsteps of his uncle and become the Abbot. But at the age of 19 Thomas acted against his parents' wishes and chose instead to join the newly-founded Order of Preachers (Dominicans)—at that time a far less prestigious Order. His mother arranged for him to be kidnapped and returned to the family castle where he was held prisoner for two years. With some help he was able to escape one night and at last join his beloved Dominicans with whom he became a great scholar.
- **Saint Clare of Assisi** was thirty-one years old when St. Thomas Aquinas was born. Her situation was similar to his. She had been deeply moved by the preaching of St. Francis (Francis himself had rebelled against his father's plans for his life) and vowed to follow his path, against her parents' wishes. One Palm Sunday, sneaking out in the middle of the night, she fled to Francis who waited for her along with some Benedictine Nuns who vested her in the habit and brought her to their monastery for monastic training. Forces of relatives were sent to bring her home, but she would not budge. Some time later her own sister, Agnes, and later her own mother, joined her in the monastery built by Francis—San Damiano.
- **Saint Agnes of Prague** was promised in marriage to Frederick II, Emperor of Germany; but when the time arrived for the solemnization of the marriage, it was impossible to persuade her to abandon her resolve to belong only to Christ in following in the footsteps of St. Clare. St. Clare encouraged Agnes to espouse herself to the King of Poverty, instead of to the Emperor. The Emperor was irate, but, on learning that St. Agnes had left him to become the spouse of Christ, he is said to have remarked: "If she had left me for a mortal man, I would have taken vengeance with the sword, but I cannot take offense because in preference to me she has chosen the King of Heaven."
- **Saint Lucy** didn't fare as well as the Saints already referred to. Some Saints resisted marriage and were put to death as a result. Lucy was born in the 3rd century. When her father died rather unexpectedly, she and her mother were left without a protecting guardian. Her mother, Eutychia, arranged a marriage with a pagan bridegroom, but Lucy refused to marry, wanting only to belong to Christ. Her rejected pagan bridegroom denounced her as a Christian to the magistrate. Eventually she had her eyes gouged out and was sentenced to death.
- **Saint Mary Frances** was sixteen years old when her father sought to force her into a marriage with a rich young man, but the saint firmly refused, and instead ran off to join the Franciscans, as a Third Order member.
- **Saint Catherine of Siena**, like St. Mary Frances, refused to marry and in rebellion, cut off her long and beautiful hair. Eventually her father relented and she devoted her life to the service of the Church as a Dominican Tertiary.

May we imitate these Saints in their resolve to set up boundaries and not let others dictate our lives.

Boundaries: Where You end and I begin. . .

There are some very insightful books that can help a person understand the need for appropriate boundaries. Having clear boundaries is essential to a healthy, balanced lifestyle. A boundary is a personal property line that marks those things for which we are responsible. In other words, boundaries define who we are and who we are not. Boundaries impact all areas of our lives: Physical boundaries help us determine who may touch us and under what circumstances – Mental boundaries give us the freedom to have our own thoughts and opinions – Emotional boundaries help us to deal with our own emotions and disengage from the harmful, manipulative emotions of others – Spiritual boundaries help us to distinguish God’s will from our own and give us renewed awe for our Creator – Often, Christians focus so much on being loving and unselfish that they forget their own limits and limitations. When confronted with their lack of boundaries, they ask: – Can I set limits and still be a loving person? – What are legitimate boundaries? – What if someone is upset or hurt by my boundaries? – How do I answer someone who wants my time, love, energy, or money? – Aren’t boundaries selfish? – Why do I feel guilty or afraid when I consider setting boundaries? In the books listed below, Dr. Henry Cloud and Dr. John Townsend offer biblically-based answers to these and other tough questions, showing us how to set healthy boundaries with our parents, spouses, children, friends, co-workers, and even ourselves. For over two decades, these best-selling authors have devoted themselves to helping people discover solutions to life’s most difficult personal and relational challenges.

Boundaries: When to Say YES, When to Say NO, to Take Control of Your Life. The authors give you the biblical basis for setting boundaries, explain how you can construct your own, and show how boundaries can be damaged. They also give you methods for dealing with abusive or controlling people and keys for gaining control of your life. Softcover, \$14.99.

Setting boundaries with children is another topic of interest to our readers and so we offer **Boundaries With Kids**. Drawing from numerous case studies, Drs. Cloud and Townsend explain how to implement the “preventive medicine” of character development in your household. They’ll show you how to define legitimate family boundaries, bring control to chaotic family life, help your children develop their own healthy boundaries, and more. 208 pp., \$14.99.

Between single life and marriage lies the journey of dating. **Boundaries in Dating** helps you to learn how to make your road as smooth as possible by setting and maintaining healthy boundaries—boundaries that will help you grow in freedom, honesty, and self-control. Softcover, 281 pp., \$12.99.

Only when you and your spouse know and respect each other’s needs, choices, and freedom can you give yourselves freely and lovingly to one another. **Boundaries in Marriage** gives you the tools you need. The authors show how to apply the principles of boundaries to your marriage. 225 pp., \$19.99.

PRAYER CARDS AVAILABLE. Father Emmerich uses two prayer cards in his retreats and conferences: the complete Serenity Prayer (which has the reference to Jesus) and the Prayer of Saint Bernard. Give us a call if you need some. They are free with your order.

Father Emmerich’s new book, *The Freedom to Love*, is available as an e-book from Barnes & Noble and Amazon.

One of the reasons was because Marcia Clark, the prosecuting attorney, allowed the judge to demean her in front of the jury.

One time a young married woman with two young children came to see me. Her husband had a serious anger problem which he often inappropriately took out on her, and in front of their children. He would even call her names in front of the children. And she would cry. He is inappropriately angry and happy; she's responsible and miserable. This woman needs to learn how to set up appropriate boundaries so as to protect herself, and in order not to jeopardize her role as mother. When her husband is emotionally sober, she needs to sit down with him and explain, "Last night you got terribly angry—yet again, and took it out on me, and dared to call me names in front of the children. If this happens one more time..." And then she needs to come up with consequences that are reasonable, responsible, and loving. No hysteria—you cannot demand respect.

What are needed are boundaries. And she must follow through. If he brings her home flowers, she must not give in but must follow through, otherwise she will never command respect. There is a reason why fences to ward off dangerous people have barbs. The offender needs to feel those barbs. There's an old wise saying that teaches: "People don't change because they see the light, but because they feel the heat."

It is a painful task to learn to set appropriate boundaries. For a person to continually open herself up emotionally to an abusive spouse is insanity. Just as God does not allow irresponsible behavior (note where we are told in Sacred Scripture that those who don't want to work shall not eat, 2 Thess. 3:10), neither should the good Christian.

The disease to please

Pleasers often think of themselves as kind and considerate, whereas in truth they are fearfully protecting themselves from being hurt in some way. To ward off people's being displeased with them, they seek to please and end up tolerating intolerable behavior. Now some years ago, as a young pleaser, a religious brother was sent by his superiors to teach high school. He had to teach every blessed sophomore in the school—his vision of hell itself! He was warned by a seasoned teacher to be strong

and not to smile until Christmas! But poor Brother William, so used to grounding his security in pleasing others, automatically smiled at his first class—and it was a disaster. No control. No one listened. Finally, he realized that as the adult, it was his duty to set up the boundaries or the students would push, push, and push until they either found the walls or pushed him off the edge. So he had a plan.

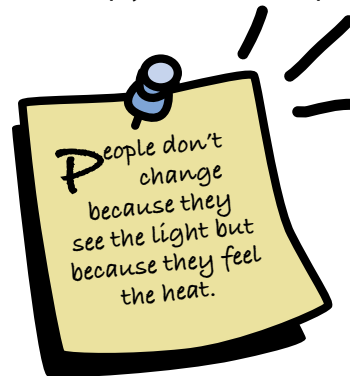
When the next class came in, and after the bell had rung, he shouted over the din of noise, "Hey, hey, hey! Anybody in here need a baby-sitter—get out! I've gone to college and have a degree in this and this and this, and I didn't come here to be your baby-sitter, so if you need one *get out and get out now!* When that bell rings, you are in your seats and there is no talking."

We can learn to have relationships without letting them control our thoughts, behaviors, and choices. Healthy relationships don't take over our lives and stop our growth. They enhance our lives and provide opportunities for us to learn and teach. They don't determine who we are; they help us discover our true selves.

Veronica Ray

Well, they all quickly sat down with no further noise. Remarkable, he thought. But as he started teaching his lesson, some kid began kicking the desk and would stop when Brother William looked around, and then continue again. Finally Brother William discovered the brat who was doing it and said, "What did I say?"

The boy responded, "I wasn't talking." It's true that Brother had said "No talking" and nothing about kicking the desk. But he realized if he said, "No kicking the desk either," he would be there ten minutes later with, "No spit wads, etc." So he simply said, "I don't play games. Get out." The boy



responded in a sorrowful voice, "I won't do it again." Brother realized if he gave in, he would lose the whole class. "It's too late," he said. "Get out."

Brother William never had another problem with class discipline, for he learned to die to himself—to his need to be liked by pleasing others. He established appropriate boundaries. ✨

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