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Message from the Spiritual Advisor: The Case for Being a Clown

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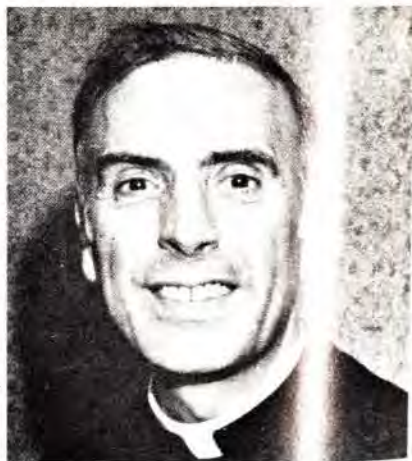
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Message from the Spiritual Advisor



The Case for Being a Clown

The physician is usually stereotyped as being a well dressed gentleman, serious, calm and ready for the handling of the most difficult cases. Quite frequently, this style fits the profession, and yet — may I say this with reverence — perhaps physicians, like priests, are clowns.

In the Broadway production of "Godspell," the Divine Healer is portrayed as a clown. In His preaching, healing and restoring man to fullness of life, He is criticized, laughed at and seen as the perfect fool. He was totally misunderstood by the multitude, and as He gave His all for the very ones He loved, they demeaned His humanness and demanded His death. In spite of His non-acceptance, He continued His journey in going about and "doing good."

As the clown masks his face with a rainbow of colors, he cleverly covers his sorrow, heartbreak and weaknesses. With his new cosmetic look, he wants everyone to feel better than himself, and with great artistry, he radiates compassion and joy which brighten the hearts of those whom he encounters.

The true clown thinks of the other person. He tries to bring about happiness that is locked in the soul of the child-like individual who sees him as a comic, a "make-believe." With a simplicity of style, he provokes smiles and laughter on faces which seem saddened, lonely and burdened with pain.

The circus is the clown's environment. All about him are gypsies, side-show barkers, tight-rope walkers and malformed brothers and sisters known as freaks. Yet in spite of his surroundings — the merry-go-round, elephants and cotton candy — he survives in his unique role to

bring happiness to the pure of heart. With simplicity, he dons baggy pants, sports a tomato-sized nose, gives no sophisticated lectures, but only presents himself with compassion and love as a helpless "clown." Children obviously sense this and the clown is rewarded with their response of happy, bright eyes.

Success is often critiqued on the possession of real estate, securities and power. The untangible signs of success are unrecorded, for they consist of beautiful smiles, laughter and love for the unfortunate whom society has rejected.

The clownish-type things are varied. The results are that they uplift another, the unloved feel important, the poor go away fulfilled. When overlooking protocol so that one can become an object of laughter is seen by observers in different ways. For some it is stupidity, for others it is humility, and for those of faith it is being Christ-like.

The clown has nothing to say — he is. In "Godspell," there is a prayer . . . "To see Thee more clearly, to love Thee more dearly, to follow Thee more nearly."

How do we see Thee? What is it all about? Oh, to be a clown . . . !

— Msgr. Dino Lorenzetti

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