

# ENCOURAGEMENT ENCOURAGEMENT

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## ‘Respect’

THE HOST APOSTOLATE  
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In days past and certainly in the western world, it was still usual to say to young people and children to ‘respect their elders’. This was ingrained into the thought and minds of successive generations. More so in China and Asian countries where it is still the case, and being inattentive to the voice of older people was considered shameful. So too in many tribal countries the chief or elder was, and is, considered a crucial role in the life of the community.

This respect had many faces and in some cases was seen as punitive and restrictive but in general it was a reminder that their age and experience or relationship in the family was of some importance. This can be seen especially in the almost universal rôle that grandparents play in the life of the family. Although this varies in importance from culture to culture a little, it is still a definition of importance.



What does respect therefore entail? And what does it mean to be respectful? The definition of respect tells us that to be respectful is to ‘give deference and treat with esteem’ or show consideration for... person or thing. Interestingly enough in a Court of Law when there is an evaluation of something the two solicitors, lawyers, while disagreeing with each other in order to defend a person or principle will often say ‘with respect...’ in other words ‘I do not agree but recognise that you have the right to say something in opposition’. This principle is also applied in many debating and even, dare I say, in political arguments, though sadly less than once applied.

Being respectful therefore does not only apply to older members of the family, including of course parents which again is less taught these days with the advent of greater freedom which does not always lead to respect and indeed affection and love.

But to be respectful requires of us so much more than merely being tolerant and careful with older people. Being respectful of others can be applied right across society, state and church. People in authority duly appointed have the right of authority and we should show them respect. They too, in turn, should respect those over whom they have any authority either through work, position, or affiliation.

A good teacher will be respectful to all his/her pupils and while having sometimes to discipline or correct them will always do so remembering to be aware of the effect of words. Good teachers will have the

respect of their class if they are just and communicate with civility. St. Francis de Sales maintained that you can do so much more with a spoonful of honey than with a barrel full of vinegar. His treatise on ‘The Devout Life’ is very respectful of those trying hard to attain some degree of holiness, especially laypeople.

The question that arises is how do we attain this respect and what does it require of us? Recently I came across ten points given to instructors and students alike. Each is well worth looking at and absorbing.

- Be kind and courteous.
- Be polite, avoid interrupting or causing disturbances.
- Listen to others and respect differences in beliefs and opinions.
- Think before you speak, and about your language and tone.
- Lend a helping hand or ear and practice compassion.
- Avoid gossip and any conversations that may be considered discriminatory or bullying.
- Respect personal space and personal property
- Understand everyone has their own experiences and beliefs..... contd.

There is more value in a little study of humility and in a single act of it than in all the knowledge in the world.  
Saint Teresa of Avila

- Speak up if others around you are being disrespectful.
- Be willing to evolve and admit mistakes.

This does not mean that we are not required to speak the truth in love but that the manner of doing so matters.

There are many examples of Jesus in the Gospel showing what we could define as respect. Often, He speaks to the Apostles privately and explained things to them with patience. Often when healing someone He takes them to one side. He does not discriminate between people for healing. His choice of words is always to teach and explain, even to those who would reject him, and when stronger words are required, He targeted them specifically at the right group.

Peter too has something to say about respect. He says quite clearly what he means. 'Respect everyone, love other believers and respect the king.' (1Peter 2-17)

One of the advantages of respecting people is that we often can face up to our own faults and failures. If we listen, we may indeed find that ours is either the fault or indeed our viewpoint may need re-evaluation. When two people engage on an issue with respect there is the possibility of a positive outcome. Where respect is missing it is more likely to become adversarial.

Not only people but things require our respect. Respecting the rights of the animal world too is important especially where financial gain leads to decline in a particular species. So too, we are required to acknowledge that animals are to be treated in accordance with their specific type and purpose. Cruelty to animals is to disrespect the Creator's plan.

Respect extends as well to those things that we use for our daily lives. We live in a disposable society and too often throw away things that can be recycled and reused. If we are not aware that there are things that are in abundance, but others have a finite life, we end up being short of the things that are for the betterment of humanity. A respect for the things given to us by nature is to be aware of the reason why they have been given to us and how best to use them.

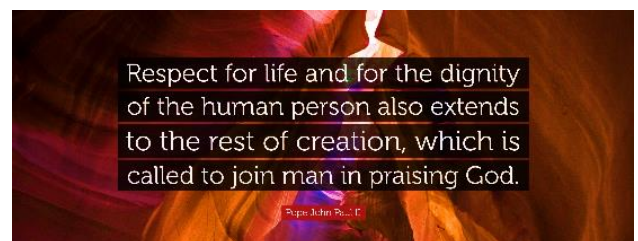
Things of beauty too have to be respected and not thought only of as things that have utilitarian function.

It is very easy to think of respect as an outdated way of dealing with people and things. Yet we can all recognise people who seem to be respectful of others: The people who say please and thank you. The people who hold doors open for one another in every sense of the word, the people who listen and ask questions rather than make judgements. Maybe it is a value that we need to see more of in today's world. We could start by using those little gracious words that mean so much. Maybe by thanking God for what we have and the people we know.

Halina Holman©

### Pope Francis

"The language of Christians who cherish the Holy Spirit, who was given to us as a gift, is special: they don't have to speak in Latin, no. It's another language: it's the language of gentleness and respect," Rome May 2021



St. John Paul II

### Feast Days in October

- 1<sup>st</sup> St. Thérèse of the Child Jesus
- 2<sup>nd</sup> The Guardian Angels
- 4<sup>th</sup> St. Francis of Assisi
- 5<sup>th</sup> St. Faustyna Kowalska
- 6<sup>th</sup> Twenty-seventh Sunday in Ordinary Time
- 7<sup>th</sup> Our Lady of the Rosary
- 9<sup>th</sup> St. John Henry Newman, 10<sup>th</sup> St. Paulinus of York
- 11<sup>th</sup> St. John XXIII 12<sup>th</sup> St. Wilfred
- 13<sup>th</sup> Twenty-eighth Sunday in Ordinary Time
- 15<sup>th</sup> St. Teresa of Avila
- 16<sup>th</sup> St. Margaret Mary Alacoque
- 17<sup>th</sup> St. Ignatius of Antioch
- 18<sup>th</sup> St. Luke, Evangelist
- 19<sup>th</sup> St. Paul of the Cross
- 20<sup>th</sup> Twenty-ninth Sunday in Ordinary Time
- 22<sup>nd</sup> St. John Paul II
- 25<sup>th</sup> Six Welsh Martyrs & Companions
- 27<sup>th</sup> Thirtieth Sunday in Ordinary Time
- 28<sup>th</sup> Sts. Simon & Jude, Apostles

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