

## Dealing with your Anger

By: Sr. Mary Anne, OSC

Jesus, with his disciples James and John, entered the village of the Samaritans on their way to Jerusalem, but they were refused hospitality. The furious James and John then urged that they “call down fire from heaven to consume them” (Lk 9:55). Serves them right, those Samaritans! The wrath and fury of James and John is about to unfurl! “But Jesus turned and rebuked them and they went on to another village” (Lk 9:57). With the Lord’s words, the seething anger of the two was pacified.

We can never say we should never be angry. Anger is such a normal human emotion that even the Lord in his humanness shared this agitation. Anger is a fact of life. Anger can be caused by both external and internal events. You could be angry at a specific person or at events, like a traffic jam or a canceled flight. Or your anger could be caused by worrying or brooding about your personal problems. Memories of traumatic or enraging events can also trigger angry feelings. The important point is how you handle this anger and agitation. Mismanaged anger results to rage and conflict, inflicting pain not only on yourself but especially on those around you. There are “peaceful!” ways of dealing with your anger. Let us consider them:

-Acknowledge your anger to God. Don’t pretend that you don’t get angry. We all do. Don’t water down your anger by labeling it as “frustration” or “irritation.” Call it what it is. Be honest with yourself, and then with God. He knows anyway. Pour out your heart to Him and tell Him what you are feeling.

-Stop, calm down, and think before you do or say anything. If you have basis for anger, learn to get angry slowly. Angry words spoken quickly are usually regretted later. Take time to make sure that you have good reason to be angry. Learn to avoid jumping to unwarranted conclusions. Listen and ask questions. Second-guess your own reactions. There are many good reasons why Scriptures tell us to be quick to listen, slow to speak, and slow to get angry.

-Talk about your feelings with someone you trust. There are times when other feelings such as fear, self pity or sadness underlie this anger. Your trusted friend, who is neutral to the situation, can help you see and deal with these surfaced emotions. Talk through the problem down through your feelings. Express these feelings to someone who cares about you. Once you have been heard and understood, you can move on. Talking it out with someone helps soothe and pacify your tension and certainly makes you feel better.

-Write. Writing can be therapeutic. Get a pencil and some paper, the physical act of the writing is the right exercise, so don’t use your computer. Be honest with your feelings. State your reasons even if they look ugly. What and who is it that

hurt you? Why is whatever it is hurting you? Describe how the hurt has affected your life. Writing can help you see and think more clearly. It is all right to cry while you do this.

-Take responsibility for your action. One way to eliminate this anger is to look at what you have done wrong. Its take two people to have a relationship and two people to argue. Take a moment and look at your contribution, remember 50% is your part. Perhaps you will see that the other person is not entirely at fault. The argument is something that has happened between two persons who are not perfect. By taking responsibility for your contribution to the conflict, you have just stepped out of the role of the victim. Many times feeling we are the victim causes us to over react to soothe ourselves.

-Talk to the person involved. In some situations it is best to confront the problem head on before resentment begins. Go to the other person involved when you are calm and discuss your feelings. Make sure you also listen to the other person. If you feel that confronting the situation will only make it worse then deal with in another way. Write down all of your feelings in a letter to the other person and then tear it up. Writing your feelings down will help express them and help you to gain more insight into the problem. As I said, you might even find that you have overreacted to the situation. If you feel you still need to talk with the other person, now you can do it more calmly and rationally, having already thought through your feelings.

-Walk it off! Walking is a great form of therapy. You may find yourself angry and frustrated at the beginning of your walk, but by the end you will have worked off enough energy to get rid of the anger. You might even go over solutions in your mind as you walk. You will find yourself unwinding and by the end of the walk you will feel renewed and definitely much better than when you set off.

Well, we all know what anger is, and we’ve all felt it; whether as a fleeting annoyance or as a full-fledged rage. Anger is a completely normal, usually healthy, human emotion. But when it gets out of control and turns destructive, it can lead to problems, problems at work, in your personal relationships, and in the overall quality of your life. The world is not out to get you. You are just experiencing some of the roughspots of daily life. Feel the anger. But an outburst, even if it is justified, is not going to fix anything. It won’t even make you feel better (and may actually make, you feel worse). How about saying a deliberately slow “Hail Mary!”, and taking deep breaths when you feel like lashing out somebody.

Mountain Echoes wishes peace and serenity.

Adopted from ‘Sunday Examine’

## READINGS OF THE WEEK

1 Kings 19:16-21

Galatians 5:1-18

Luke 9:51-62

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## 常 年 期 第 十 三 主 日

徐 錦 堯 神 父

**中國文化**：年年難過年過，處處無家處處家。亦余心之所善兮，唯九死其猶未悔。不遭人忌是庸才。墨子服役者八十人，皆可使赴火蹈刃，死不旋踵，化之所致也。讀聖賢書，所學何事。立地以上承天，承天道以隆人。

有一個人對耶穌說：「你無論往哪裡去，我都要跟隨你。」耶穌對他說：「狐狸有穴，天空的飛鳥有巢，可是人子連棲身枕頭的地方都沒有……任憑死人去埋葬他們的死人吧！你要去傳揚天主的國……手扶著犁而往後看的，不適合進天主的國。」(路 9:58-62) 古往今來，都有不少人要追隨耶穌，但耶穌卻毫不含糊的告訴他們，和祂在一起究竟是什麼一回事，要承擔的又是什麼樣的後果。上面的經文，還告訴我們，做耶穌的門徒該有什麼特質。

**第一**、耶穌的門徒必須吃得苦、「捱得」、忍得，可以忍受連枕頭之地都沒有的、貧無立錐的艱苦生活條件，可以經得起「年年難過年過，處處無家處處家」的長期考驗。

**第二**、耶穌的門徒必須以天國為優先，而且是絕對的優先，並且要懂得如何在適當的時候，把其他的所有東西都暫擱一旁：「任憑死人去埋葬他們的死人吧！」即是要讓屬世的人，去做他們屬世的事。本來，我們都是「在世」的，而且也深愛著這個世界，因為基督徒絕對不應逃避這個世界，和我們在這世界中所應承擔的義務。但我們卻是「在世而不屬於世」，因為我們負有更重要的任務。

**第三**、耶穌的門徒必須義無反顧的追隨耶穌，無怨、無悔的和耶穌一起生活，一生堅持和耶穌一起並肩作戰、共同奮鬥，並具有屈原那種「亦余心之所善兮，唯九死其猶未悔」的堅貞和至死不渝之心。

這是一段十分「硬碰硬」的經文，嚴肅、認真、絕對，沒有妥協的餘地，聽起來有點無情和不可理喻，因為說這話的，同樣是一個十分強硬的耶穌！祂不要求門徒做到九十九分，祂要求的是一百分！

其實，耶穌本來也是一個十分多樣化的人，祂有硬的一面，也有軟的一面。

一方面，耶穌確是良善心謙的，對人充滿了同情和諒解。祂輕撫兒童的頭，赦免罪婦的罪，顯增餅的奇跡去讓群眾吃飽；祂為朋友的死而哭泣，也為民族的苦難而流淚；祂的臨別贈言更是充滿了期盼、溫馨、愛意與柔情。在那個溫情洋溢的晚餐廳中，祂連自己的心、身體和寶血都留下來，作人們的食糧了。中國文化所推崇的溫柔敦厚等美德，耶穌樣樣都有。

但在另一方面，耶穌也是一個革命家，一個挑戰傳統惡習的人，祂甚至說過：「我帶來的不是和平，而是刀劍。」(瑪 10:34) 西默盎就認定耶穌要「使以色列中許多人跌倒和復起，並成為反對的記號。」(路 2:34)

在中國人的通俗智慧中，老早就有「不遭人忌是庸才」的感慨，而耶肋米亞先知的蒙召，也是要「執行拔除、破壞、毀滅、推翻、建設和栽培的任務」(耶 1:10)。這大概也是所有有理想的人或先知們的任務和使命吧？

人間從來不會只有天天笑語盈盈的友愛共融，理想的團體也不會是只有一團和氣的！耶穌來到世上，不只是要建立一個友愛共融的教會，也更是要找尋一群和祂志同道合的人，去為天國的理想而作艱苦的、長期的奮鬥！

中國春秋時代的墨子，就曾經為了兼愛、和平、非攻的理想，而建立了一個墨者團體。這個團體內的所有人，都有耶穌所要求的那種剛強、堅忍、有耐力的性格。所以在墨子的這個團體中，就有許多連死都不怕的人，即所謂「墨子服役者八十人，皆可使赴火蹈刃，死不旋踵，化之所致也。」

化之所致，即教化的結果，就是中國古人所謂：「讀聖賢書，所學何事」的覺醒。文化本來就是一種力量。聖賢書教導我們要為聖為賢，要活得崇高而偉大，要「立地以上承天，承天道以隆人」。這一切，本身就有非凡的吸引力。

跟隨耶穌本身也有非凡的吸引力。在耶穌內，我們完成自我、成聖成賢；在耶穌內，我們活得快樂，活出一種充滿天上神恩和平安的快樂；在耶穌內，我們可以把福音傳遍天涯海角，使天國臨現人間。

這樣，我們又哪會為自己選擇了耶穌而反悔，又何須頻頻回頭，去留戀我們曾經棄之如敝屣的污濁之物呢？

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