

Outreach Encouragement Insert for March

One of the most common reasons given for not talking about our faith in Christ with other people is the sarcastic or dismissive response that we might get back:

1. You think you're so perfect!
2. Look who's talking, aren't you the one who used to...
3. That's fine for you, but I'm doing fine on my own.

In today's Epistle lesson (Philippians 3:4-14) Paul gives us encouragement to handle these kinds of responses.

1. In the resurrection from the dead, that's when Christ will perfect me. Until then I consider everything of my own life as rubbish compared with knowing Jesus, my Lord.
2. You can point out my past, the sins I have committed, and I will tell you how sorry I am for all of them. I can also tell you that God has forgiven all of my sins because Jesus has already taken all the punishment I deserve. God has forgotten them all and tells me to do the same, and to keep my focus on Jesus' cross, His empty tomb, and the home in Heaven He is preparing for me.
3. Paul thought that way too, thinking that he had a righteousness of his own that came from his following the letter of the law. And I'm not a bad person and neither are you. But whatever sense of self-worth I had, I now count as worthless for the sake of Christ. It's all about Him and not about me.

Our fears about other people's responses to our talking about our faith in Jesus are things that we can consider rubbish, too, as we focus on another verse from St. Paul: It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me. (Galatians 2:20)