

Five Principles to Become More Fulfilled the Rest of our Lives - MabuhayRadio

Written by Ernie Delfin
Wednesday, 10 February 2010 13:14 -

By Ernie D. Delfin

Last year, like many people who follow the news, I also felt the pangs of anxiety coupled with some degree of hopelessness over so many things beyond one's control. Constant news of continued economic and financial meltdown, terrorism, global warming and wars in Iraq and Afghanistan disturbed my mind.

To start fresh for 2010, after New Year's Day, my wife and I just did something we have not done for decades: LEAVE HOME and went away for several days to a place we have never been before, St. Francis Retreat Center, in the quaint town of San Juan Bautista, about 40 miles southeast of San Jose, California.

We were the only "guests" of the Franciscans as the New Year's retreatants have left. Except for the few friars and brothers who live there, the only company we saw was a family of the self-supporting wild deer that descended from the mountain to eat better greens near our cabins. Many different kinds of birds also entertained us as they still enjoy the place that is not yet commercialized by their number one enemy: the homo sapiens.

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As there were no TV or radio (yes, we had our cell phones but no signals) we were forced not to know what's going on in the "civilized" world down below. It is a luxury to just while away the time without interference from anyone or by the pressure of daily living. We experienced the Spartan life of the Franciscans, living simply so others simply live.

Serendipitously, there I read an article from the *Catholic News Service*, written by Fr. Eugene Hemrick which is worth sharing to my readers. Describing the five colorful lunettes painted by Charles Sprague Pearce in the Library of Congress, Fr. Hemrick enumerated Five Principles to have a balanced and fulfilled family life. Let me expound my own feelings from that article as I jot down in my journal:

First, RECREATION. Weakened by the toxins and worries caused by living a complicated life, our body's cells must be re-created. By its very nature, recreation is meant to invigorate us with new energies for a healthier life.

Second, REST. In the mountains the only music you hear is the soothing sound of the wind playing with the leaves and branches of the trees that surround the center, the chirping of different birds, and the occasional sounds of animals communicating with each other. Listening to that "sound of silence" emanating from deep within becomes a melodious music that mimics the rhythms renewed life.

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Third, STUDY. This verb is closely associated with our human power of reflection that forces us to discern what is truly important in our unending quest for the meaning of our lives. We should not allow commentators do the thinking for our lives that prevent our analytical minds from deeper thoughts. Socrates said it best when he wrote “An unexamined life is not worth living for”.

Fourth, LABOR. This is one of my pet peeves in a society today that is becoming quite socialized when people can eat even without working! Our society, subliminally encouraged by Big Brother, has been afflicted with that hedonistic and minimalist disease: doing the least labor but expecting the greatest result. We must as a society re-learn and practice the old fashioned dictum: “You don’t work, you **DON’T EAT!**”

Fifth, RELIGION. I would prefer to call this “SPIRITUALITY”. The realization that we all must die and go to a life-thereafter (if that is also your belief) can really slow us down and motivate us to question ourselves: “What legacy do I want to leave after I am gone?” Leaving a legacy for our children and their children is the *raison d’etre*, as we do our random Service Above Self every day.

Until then, I wish you all a more-fulfilled and balanced life the rest of your existence! # # #

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