

Homily Outline Worldview

Freedom to Choose as the Essence of Human Dignity and the Source of Human Happiness

The modern narrative is a story of liberation from oppressive forces. To maximize human freedom is seen as a self-evident moral task and a self-evident source of human happiness and human dignity. From Christendom to Apostolic Mission: Pastoral Strategies for an Apostolic Age by University of Mary. Pg. 85

Sources of Christian Ethics. By Servais Pinckaers OP

Freedom of indifference – the ability to do what you want. I’m only free if I have lots of options and choices and I can choose whatever I want.

Or:

Freedom for excellence – the ability to do what you ought – the freedom to do what I should do.

1. The Christian understanding of freedom

The whole of the Christian hope has been summed up by saying that, in Christ, the human is set free: from death, from devilish tyranny, from destructive passions, from ignorance, brought to the status of sons and daughters of God as free men and women. From Christendom to Apostolic Mission: Pastoral Strategies for an Apostolic Age by University of Mary. Pg. 85

- *Involved in the classical and Christian understanding of freedom was the idea that we were most free when we became most fully what we were meant to be, when we approximated most truly our given nature.*

CCC 1733 The more one does what is good, the freer one becomes. There is no true freedom except in the service of what is good and just. The choice to disobey and do evil is an abuse of freedom and leads to “the slavery of sin.”

2. The secular progressive understanding of freedom

In the progressive vision, freedom has come to mean...the possibility of choosing whatever my individual will desires at whatever time

- *I am most free when there is nothing impeding me from doing what I wish to do.*
- *What is right and wrong and how I conceive my own existence is my own choice.*
- *The most dignified person is the one who has self-identified, who has determined who and what he or she will or will not be.*

2.a If God exists, then man cannot be free.

2.b *The insistence on autonomy in the progressive vision has induced an intoxication with breaking things that are thought to stand in the way of personal freedom.*

Freedom is to be accomplished not in the careful construction overtime of the conditions under which humans could have the opportunity to achieve their true nature, but rather in the bursting of bonds that hold the individual will in check.

3. Religion is seen as at war with modern program of freedom

Let any cause, any program, any activity, any person, be claimed to promote freedom, and it is assumed that we are dealing with a simple good. Let something be thought to get in the way of freedom, and it is clear that it must be swept away.

- Much of the mythic power of the progressive vision comes from its claim to champion freedom and, by that means, to provide ever increasing dignity to humans.

Conclusion

“Every generation of Americans needs to know that freedom consists not in doing what we like, but in having the right to do what we ought.” – St. John Paul II
Homily at Oriole Park at Camden Yards, Baltimore Sunday, 8 October 1995

Freedom, Truth and Love all go together