

Living Outside My Comfort Zone

Objective: Living outside comfort zones is easy for some, tremendously difficult for others subject to overwhelming terror. Self-imposed limits defining comfort zones may or may not find the right balance between security and the fruit of growth. Our objective today is to discover when, why and how to stretch the boundaries of our comfort zones. The objective is to explore moving with “stately being” using the grace of Christ to help you, your spouse, children or others to take on something new, or different in activities or relationships; spiritual, personal, familial or professional that is good.

Song Suggestion: Here I am Lord (695)

Bible and Catechism Readings:

Job 30:15

Terrors overwhelm me; my dignity is driven away as by the wind, my safety vanishes like a cloud.

Proverbs 30:29-31

There are three things that are stately in their stride, four that move with stately bearing: a lion, mighty among beasts, who retreats before nothing; a strutting rooster, a he-goat, and a king secure against revolt

Catechism 1742

Freedom and grace. The grace of Christ is not in the slightest way a rival of our freedom when this freedom accords with the sense of the true and the good that God has put in the human heart. On the contrary, as Christian experience attests especially in prayer, the more docile we are to the promptings of grace, the more we grow in inner freedom and confidence during trials, such as those we face in the pressures and constraints of the outer world. By the working of grace, the Holy Spirit educates us in spiritual freedom in order to make us free collaborators in his work in the Church and in the world: Almighty and merciful God, in your goodness take away from us all that is harmful, so that, made ready both in mind and body, we may freely accomplish your will.

Catechism 2339

Chastity **{prudence}** includes an apprenticeship in self-mastery which is a training in human freedom. The alternative is clear: either man governs his passions and finds peace, or he lets himself be dominated by them and becomes unhappy. "Man's dignity therefore requires him to act out of conscious and free choice, as moved and drawn in a personal way from within, and not by blind impulses in himself or by mere external constraint. Man gains such dignity when, ridding himself of all slavery to the passions, he presses forward to his goal by freely choosing what is good and, by his diligence and skill, effectively secures for himself the means suited to this end." {clarity added}

Saint:

Saint Mathew, a Roman tax collector, was drawn by and to Jesus as one of the twelve disciples. Mathew's comfort zone before Jesus was likely a self-serving and opportunistic wealth-oriented comfort zone making his living from Roman tax collection. Mathew's comfort zone changed completely when he followed Jesus, and later recorded his witness. Everything changed for Mathew when he realized spiritual freedom and collaborated with Jesus.

Vignette: – Three friends met one morning for “the breakfast club”. They were an unusual group in that they spanned three generations. One was married fellow eight years into his married life with three young children. Another was married 30 years with older children facing many changes as they approach high school graduation. And the third was older, married, and retired from working. As they spoke about their lives and concerns; they each expressed a related theme. Each faced comfort zone challenges. The young father did not mind change and his comfort zone was not excessively tight; he felt free to try lots of things. But those in his life, and particularly his children, were highly change averse, not comfortable with different things, afraid of many things. His wife handled those feelings well, but he was concerned that his kid’s fears would eventually resolve without him doing more. The middle-aged dad’s oldest son was contemplating all the changes he would be facing as he left the comfort and security of his life at home with his parents after he graduated high school next year. His son hates change and is highly risk averse. His father is concerned how about to how best to help his son learn to manage outside his comfort zone as he graduates and leaves home. The oldest member of the breakfast club realized as the other two discussed their feelings and concerns that he had the opposite problem. It seemed to him that he was losing his stately stride; feeling increasingly uncomfortable with change, increasingly risk averse and almost like he was regressing to childhood fears of change. His world was becoming smaller, he feared it. In the middle of their discussion their Deacon from St. Remy’s Church came in and sat down then joined the conversation. After hearing their concerns, he had advice for each but focused upon how they could leverage their Catholic faith formation to dispel terrors and act on free choice, not blind impulse, to do what is good for themselves and their children. He said that learning to navigate from or expand comfort zones is easier if it is done within the within the context of what is good and true to the teachings of the Church. Remember that Jesus is always with those who believe and follow Him.

Questions for Large and Small Group Discussion:

What do you think the Deacon’s advice was to each breakfast club member?

What advice would you give to the breakfast club members?

How does one get comfortable with discomfort of change?

What areas in your comfort zone are challenges you’d like to fix?

What are comfort zone challenges among those you love face?

What is the best example of a comfort zone challenge you overcame?

What comfort zone challenges do you face related to your faith formation?

How might one leverage their Catholic faith formation to assist with comfort zone challenges? For parent, self, spouse or children or friend?

Resources:

In what ways should Christians be prepared to step outside their comfort zone? | GotQuestions.org
<https://www.gotquestions.org/Christian-comfort-zone.html>

7 Things You Must Do To Leave Your Comfort Zone - HaroldHerring.com
<https://haroldherring.com/blogs/harolds-blogs/richthoughts/325-7-things-you-must-do-to-leave-your-comfort-zone>

Getting out of our comfort zone - The Catholic Messenger
<http://www.catholicmessenger.net/2021/09/getting-out-of-our-comfort-zone/>

Action Plan:

An affirmative relevant statement followed by 2 or 3 concrete action points and space for the small teams to come up with their own.

Example: Write down one comfort zone challenge for you, or someone you love and then jot notes about how you might approach the goal using what you learned today.

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