

Traveling Companion: If you were arrested...

Fr. Michael Tracey

Throughout our diocese, many young people are preparing for or have just received the sacrament of Confirmation. We asked the young people in our parish to write an essay, titled, "If you were arrested for being a Catholic, would there be enough evidence to convict you?" The answers were both interesting and enlightening.

One young girl wrote, "I love being Catholic. I am constantly astonished by the beauty of my Church. I love studying Church doctrine, delving as deeply as I can into the faith which is such a significant part of my life. I love thinking of clever questions to test Church doctrine because I know there will always be a more clever answer... I don't think there is anything more important one can study than one's faith, and the Catholic faith has an outlet for all of my explorative energy...I want to be knowledgeable so that I can walk a straight path, as well as assisting my friends, my family and my future husband and children on their journey.

Another young girl wrote that her room had all kinds of Catholic books, bibles, medals, rosary and holy water.

One young man said that "if the accusers are looking for someone who strives to live up to Catholic ideas in daily actions, then the answer 'yes' but that would make most people on earth guilty of being Catholics. If the accusers were looking for someone who was raised Catholic and received all the proper sacraments, then the answer would once again be 'yes' but I was also raised with the heritage of the fundamentalist churches which means that I've admitted that I am sinful and believe that Jesus' death on the cross saves me."

"I am a Catholic because I choose to be one. My mother was Catholic, and my father was Baptist. I was raised a Catholic, but I also went to my dad's church with my grandmother. I went to vacation bible school and young classes at the Baptist church, but I ultimately choose to be Catholic. I went to church every Sunday, but my mom eventually slacked off. I choose to be a part of this confirmation class. It was my decision to come here and be confirmed. I am ready to confirm my faith in God, and show everyone that I am a Catholic because I choose to be one," wrote another young person.

"Honestly, there would be some evidence but probably not enough to prove me guilty," suggested one young man, "There are just too many ways that I could be a better person...for the most part, I try to show kindness and compassion toward others, but I often fail and am mean in what I say and do. This can most prominently be seen in my relationship with my mom and brother. I get very aggravated with them and often am not a true Christian toward them as a result."

"I think that to have the type of relationship I want with God, there needs to be complete and total honesty and openness." Assumed a young man. "There is where the issue lies. I am not completely open with Him, because I am still doing my soul searching. I need to work on my relationship with God."

Yes, if for some reason Catholicism was punishable by death, I assume I would become a martyr fairly quickly. However, I doubt they would kill me because of where I went to school or what I did on Sundays. Those things aren't what make you a Catholic. What makes you a Catholic is that you always take the narrow way, you always keep Jesus in your heart and God on your mind, and you always take time out to help others," indicated another young woman.

Maybe, it is now time to rest our case.