

THE HIGH PLAINS PREACHER

Welcome to the High Plains Preacher, stories about the Bible, High wind, fast horses, lack of moisture and other elements of life in the Texas Panhandle

Bad News to Good News

by Fr. Jim Schmitmeyer

Did you know that watching just three minutes of negative news in the morning increases your chances of have a lousy day by 75%? On the other hand, those who watch positive stories, report having a good day 88% of the time. In short, a dose of good news in the morning can influence you for up to 8 hours!

Does this mean we should avoid watching CNN, Fox News or MSNBC? Does this mean reporters should just focus on “feel-good stories,” such as dogs saving the lives of their masters? No. Of course not. Evil does exist in this world. Terrible things do happen.

Yet, bad news is not the only news and it helps to keep a broader perspective in mind. For instance, news reports that include how people can respond to crises, how individuals and institutions unite to correct an injustice, how communities pull together in times of disaster and how people of goodwill respond with courage, valor and faith in the face of trepidation and even war, these realities actually transform “bad news” into “opportunities for virtue.”

And this makes a big difference. This makes all the difference in the world. Yet, for some reason, we tend to focus on...and magnify...bad news. For instance, you’ll recall that in September, 2016, a priest in France was killed by an Islamic terrorist as he celebrated Holy Mass. But how many of us recall that the next Sunday, all over France, Muslims attended Mass to pray with and support their fellow citizens?

How easy it is to concentrate on the bad news. So, the next time you see only darkness and despair in the world around you, turn away from the Bad News and back to the Good News. Turn away from the darkness and turn back to the Church where shines the Light of Hope, the Light of Faith, the Light of Christ which no darkness can ever extinguish.

Humble as it is, your parish church is the most reliable place to get a reliable perspective on the news that we hear and the world through which we travel on the way to Heaven, the road to Peace, the highway to the Glory of the Risen Christ.