

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

Muddy Jeans

by Fr. Jim Schmitmeyer

You've probably heard about it by it now: a department store known as Nordstrom is selling jeans caked with fake mud. Believe it or not, here is how the pants are being promoted in their advertising: "These jeans are "heavily distressed" and "embody the rugged, Americana workwear that's seen some hard-working action with a crackled, caked-on muddy coating that shows you're not afraid to get down and dirty."

If you find this hard to believe, wait until you heard the price: \$425.00 for a fake-out pair of jeans with fake mud. When I heard this, I couldn't wait to let my nephews—dairy farmers back in Ohio—about this excellent opportunity to diversify their farming operations by expanding into the fashion business. Why, their worn jeans get caked with more than mud. In fact, they come perfumed with the scent of livestock. Call it *Eau de Holstein*. Talk about jeans with a cowboy cut, they got 'em! Recommended retail price: \$750.00 a pair!

St. Paul once wrote, "Those who refuse to work should not eat!" I wonder what he would say about rich people who dress up in clothes and pretend that they aren't afraid to work hard or get their hands dirty. The whole thing sounds silly to me. Jesus himself warned about using clothes to impress other people when he talked about religious leaders who would "widen their phylacteries and lengthen their tassels."

The editor of *Texas Agriculture*, Julie Tomascik, commented on Nordstrom's fake mud jeans with these words: "Dirt (on jeans) is earned, not bought. Each stain tells a story: when a water line breaks and you grab a shovel to unearth and mend the pipe. Or it's a gradual build-up from a 14-hour work day that takes you from the shop to the field multiple times."

She concluded her article by reminding her readers that it's farmers who provide the cotton for those jeans. Her point is well-made. As a nation, we owe deep respect to those who labor to produce our food, weave the clothes we wear and build the homes in which we live. Hard work is honest work and turning it into some sort of fashion statement simply goes against the grain. So, thanks to all those who raised a ruckus on social media about jeans with fake mud.

May God continue to continue to bless "the fruit of the earth and the work of human hands" which we offer at every Mass, holy gifts for a holy sacrifice of praise.