

There Is Nobody Like You

by Father John Catoir JCD- 11/16/17

God is always acting in our lives, sometimes subtly, and sometimes times dramatically. I firmly believe that the future of the world will be more joyful because God is continually supplying us with the graces we need to help make this a better world.

Theologically, actual grace is defined as a light to your mind or an impulse to your will, coming directly from the mind of God. He influences us without taking away our freedom. He prods to take action. We may not understand the process as it's happening, but His graces are very effective.

Permit me to tell you a two-part story from my life, where God intervened and changed my world. The first part of the story has to do with my vocational calling. I didn't want to be a priest, but I did aspire to be holy. I wanted marriage and a family, but somehow, I became more and more attracted to the priesthood. God eventually wore me down. I entered the seminary and was ordained in 1960. I never looked back.

The second part happened 17 years later. I learned that a Catholic multi-media organization, called The Christophers, needed a new director. Their founder, Father James Keller, had died. My father gave me Father Keller's book, "You Can Change the World", on my eighteenth birthday, and I savored every word of it.

After working as a Catholic priest in various parishes for 17 years, and overseeing the Marriage Tribunal of the Diocese of Paterson for ten years, I felt the need for a new challenge. I knew that I didn't have the experience to run a media organization, so I concluded, "Why even bother to apply?"

Fears and apprehensions killed my initial enthusiasm, and for three weeks I did nothing. Then, BINGO, a burst of energy hit me. I suddenly thought, "What have I got to lose?" I decided to write a letter to the Christopher Board of Directors, realizing that the only thing holding me back was my fear of being rejected.

It took exactly one year and two interviews, from the time I applied until the board called to tell me that they had chosen me to be their new Director. I was flabbergasted, jubilant, and extremely grateful.

Looking back, I now see how the grace of God led me to the priesthood, and later to become the successor to my boyhood idol, Father Keller. It's extremely important for all of us to see the connection between

God's grace, and the decisions we make in life. We should never allow fear to prevail over the noble desires of the heart

For the next 18 years I appeared on radio and television shows, wrote books and articles, and gave talks around the world; all aimed at bringing the Christopher message to a wider audience. "God has a job for you to do that nobody else can do. There is no one like you. You CAN make a difference."

In conclusion, I gladly repeat that message. We need what only you can give; first to the people around you, and then to the world beyond. There's nobody like you, and with the help of God, you can make this a better world.

May the Lord be your strength and your joy.