

Jesus For “Clunkers”

There has been much publicity during the past months about a program in our country called “Cash for Clunkers.” The main purpose was to give an incentive to buyers to purchase a new automobile at a discount. You know how it worked. If you had a “clunker,” a car that was previously unable to be sold because of its condition or age, you could turn it in, **redeem** it, for a down payment on a new car. The program seemed to work quite well.

So, what kind of car qualified as a clunker? Well, it was an older-model car, first of all, that didn’t meet up with modern gas mileage standards. In other words, it was getting less efficiency out of the engine than what it was designed for. Also, it didn’t meet up with the new air quality standards – too many emissions.

There are usually some basic reasons for these failures. Internal parts get worn out. The spark just isn’t there any more. The timing gets out of sync. The oil gets sludgy and thick.

How did all that happen? Certainly, years of usage contributed a great deal. Then again, maybe the owner abused the car. Maybe he didn’t have the time to take care of it well. Maybe he took it for granted. Maybe he forgot to look at the owner’s manual offered by the manufacturer.

To put it simply, every vehicle needs regular care in order for it to run at peak efficiency. You need to change the oil regularly; check the air pressure in the tires; fill up the washer solvent to be able to see more clearly on troublesome days.

Unfortunately, even with the best care, you eventually have to trade in the old for a newer model. And the **payments** start again.

What does all this have to do with Christmas? Well, I guess we could say that we, in some way, could be considered as “**clunkers.**”

Whether we’re an older, or a newer model, we may not be running up to capacity, as efficiently as we were designed to be. We get worn out from the struggles of life. We get thick and sludgy and jaded from the pollution of

sinfulness around us. We get out of sync with that truest reality – God. The spark of the Spirit has gotten weaker. Too many **Omissions**.

And how did all this happen? Mostly unintentionally, at times we may have neglected God, the one Reality in life that really counts. Some times we take Him and His love and gifts for granted. Sometimes we feel that we just don't have the time. We're too busy. Sometimes, we forget to consult the owner's manual that God has provided for us – first, the **BIBLE (Basic Information Before Leaving Earth)**. We neglect the Church teachings, and also the people whom God has placed in our lives to help keep us on the right path. We forget, that in order to see things clearly, we have to renew the solvent of the waters of Baptism by confession, Mass and communion. And so, we get “**clunkier**” and “**clunkier.**”

For me, **Christmas is God's trade-in plan! “Jesus for Clunkers!”** Christmas began the **divine** program of the Father trading His Son Jesus in order to buy us back. He wants us to be as new and as pristine as when we were first born. And so, Jesus became one of us. I'm convinced that Jesus loves being human. Why else would He consent to come on this earth when He was so comfortable in heaven? He knew that we couldn't buy back ourselves, or even buy a new model. Our great and loving God had to do it, because we were powerless by ourselves. Jesus is God, and He took our place to satisfy the debt of our sins. He makes us **totally new** with **His** life. He takes us just the way we are today, and He works with us – slowly but surely. And, His makeover is not just a **cosmetic** one – like a new paint job. He **re-works us** from the frame on up. All of this – because He became human out of love for us! Amazing!

AND, it doesn't cost you ANYTHING! Just love Him and be faithful to His ways. Is that too much to ask?

Government programs can give only temporary relief to a relatively few. God's program – **Jesus for Clunkers – is forever, and for all! Now, aren't you glad you're a “clunker”?** Think about it. You're the reason why Jesus came on this earth! Amazing!

And so, **from one big “clunker” to all of you**, I wish you a blessed Christmas. I'll see you for your next tune-up at our next Mass! The Light has been passed on to us. Somebody has to bring the glow of Christmas to the world. **If it's not we, who will?**