A Short Story - Teaching Hatred
By Deacon Gerry Palermo

Anger is a desire for revenge. Deliberate hatred is contrary to charity. Respect for and development of human life require peace. Earthly peace is the image and fruit of the peace of Christ, the messianic "Prince of Peace." [Instead] ***bear witness to evangelical charity (Selected first sentences of CCC 2302, 2303, 2304, 2305, 2306).***

All in the Family

A woman had a verbal argument with her Sister-In-Law. It was a pretty bad disagreement. In the flush of the moment she turned to her young daughter and said, "You are to never speak to Auntie Nonames again." Months went by. Tempers eased, emotions calmed. The two women reconciled. The daughter, however, was left devastated. In those intervening months, the daughter studied for clues on how to hate. She watched her mother carefully. Every nuance, gesture, sound, facial expression that applied to the now hateful relationship with Auntie was studied, cataloged and practiced. She was taught to hate and hate she will do. It took years to undo the damage. In some ways, the complete healing from the lessons of hate never actually occurred. It became her frame of reference for dealing with disagreement.

Hatred stirs up disputes, but love covers all offenses (Pv 10:12).

Neighborhood Dogs

My neighbor's dog used to like me. But we had a disagreement. A disagreement not in front of the dog but at a community meeting. Ever since the dog growls at me. We had long since come to a constructive peace. But the dog doesn't know that. She was taught to hate and hate she will do. He scolds her now, "Stop, it's just Gerry." Yes, the dog said in reply, exactly... grrrr. It will take years to undo the damage. In some ways, the complete healing from the lessons of hate may not occur. It became the dog's frame of reference for dealing with neighborhood disagreement. There are other dogs with the same problem.

A brother offended is more unyielding than a stronghold; such strife is more daunting than castle gates (Pv 18:19).

Defense requires Offense

Or Offense requires defense. It depends on how much adulting is present. When the policeman came to the car door, did you try and deny, negotiate or excuse the infraction? When you get a speeding ticket, do you hate all policemen forever? Do you hate that policeman specifically? Do you teach your children (and dogs) to hate the policeman or to obey speed limits?

Do not be friendly with hotheads, nor associate with the wrathful, Lest you learn their ways, and become ensnared (Pv 22:24-25).

Personal Mastery

Sin lies in wait at the door: its urge is for you, yet you can rule over it (Gen 4:7).

It is within you to do better. Don't let inheritance of grievance be your endowment.

The human heart plans the way, but the LORD directs the steps (Pv 16:9)

Peace be with you.

Deacon Gerry

Disclaimer – Names, times and places are fictional or obscured to protect the privacy of others without distorting the essential truth of the encounter.