

MOVING IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION? I heard a story about an “Old Timer” who was driving on the highway when his cell phone rang. He picked it up. It was his wife. “Herman,” she said, “Please be careful. I heard on the radio that there is a car going in the wrong direction on Route 80!” Herman replied, “Heck, it’s not one car-there’s hundreds of them!” Well, most of the time we know when we are going in the wrong direction when driving-at least I hope so! However, it is a different story when it comes to morality in our society. Many people are indeed “Going in the wrong direction” morally speaking and don’t even think twice about it. Take for example, couples living together before marriage. A priest friend of mine doesn’t even ask that question anymore when couples come to the rectory to plan a wedding. He just presumes that they are. How times have changed. Then there is the scourge of legalized abortion in the United States. Although this Holocaust continues daily, most people don’t seem to care too much about it. However, the killing of a gorilla in a Cincinnati zoo about to pounce upon a youngster who had entered his cage was protested by over 200,000 people! The issue of pornography in our society is also a deep concern among men and women in America, it is a very big problem. Recently, I read a story about a boy named Nathan. Nathan is only twelve years old. Yet, he has watched so much porn at his young age already that he is almost numb to it. As we know, in today’s “Wired Up” world internet porn is everywhere and easy to get. Statistics tell us that by 18 years of age, only 3% of boys and 17% of girls will never have laid their eyes on it. So it seems that a good number of people are heading in the wrong direction when it comes to leading a moral life. One of the great saints of the catholic church, Thomas Aquinas had a basic principle: “Good is to be done and evil is to be avoided.” It’s a simple idea but difficult to put into practice. It’s not easy for anyone of us to be good in our world today where there is so much “Bad” around us. It takes strength of character and guts to go against the grain and to do good and to be good. I heard about a father with two children who were teenagers. They asked their dad for money to go to a certain movie. He refused them because the movie had sexual overtones and explicit scenes, the kids said, “But dad, sex is only a little bit of the movie-the rest is a wonderful love story!” But the father emphatically refused. At dinner that night, the teenagers were sulking but then dad announced that for desert, they were having freshly baked brownies. The kids lit up. “Mom has made your favorite chocolate brownies tonight-but there is one thing you should know. I had her mix a bit of manure from the garden into the chocolate frosting.” “What!?” The kids indignantly asked. “How could you?” “Well,” Dad said, “It’s just a little bit of manurethe rest is good brownies. Enjoy!” It doesn’t take much darkness to ruin a soul and that is why we have to be alert. If we have a strong faith, if we pray and receive the sacraments we are going in the right direction of goodness, happiness and holiness!

Sincerely in our Lord,

Fr. Jerome