

PASTOR'S CORNER



Even the king and his attendants marveled at the young man's courage, because he regarded his sufferings as nothing.

There's a principle we've all heard: that one should always choose the lesser of two evils. The witness in the book of Maccabees reminds us of what that means. Because there are two kinds of evil: the evil of sin and the evil of suffering – and western culture has always realized (until recently) that the greater evil is the evil of sin: that no matter how heinous the crime, what the perpetrator does to his own soul is always worse than what he does to his victim. We may never choose sin. If all we have before us are two sinful choices we choose neither. But when we must choose between the evil of sin and the evil of suffering we ought to always choose the lesser of two evils and accept the suffering, even unto torture and death, rather than commit sin.

The three brothers we hear from in this shortened portion of the story from Maccabees remind us of why we can do that: because *the King of the world will raise us up to live again forever*. Because in 'the world to come' there will be justice and judgment. There will be a resurrection and it will be a bodily resurrection: they can cut off our hands they can cut out our tongues but we *hope to receive them again* from the one who gave them to us as we were formed in our mother's womb. Meanwhile, for those who do not repent *there will be no resurrection to life*.

In a culture that denies the resurrection, that denies even the existence of the soul, it's no surprise that we've turned everything on its head. Suffering becomes the greatest evil which we must eradicate at all cost; There's no more need to worry about sin except insofar as I cause someone else to suffer; And since there's no reckoning, no judgement to face because there is no world to come, I can use any means I want to achieve my goals so long as I don't get caught. We must never conform to that. And we must be ready to choose suffering rather than sin *with the hope God gives of being raised up by him*.

In Christ, through Mary,

Fr. Dominic David Maichrowicz, OP