

Flogged Fathers

December 8, 2007

Last week Eleison Comments suggested that, as the prime remedy for the scarcity of vocations to the Catholic priesthood (or Brotherhood or Sisterhood), family fathers should set a leading example of true piety in the home. But that was not to say that today's young fathers are alone to blame. Let me quote again from the non-Catholic friend in England, quoted in EC#12 on "Family Destruction," commenting this time on today's workplace:

"The way the world now works has made it harder for the young people in the work-force. Most of them cannot afford to buy their own homes, given the state of the property market. At work they have to cope with the pressure of instant communication, the ignoring of time-zones leading to unbelievably long working hours, the increase in graduate numbers and therefore the competition for worthwhile jobs, the influx of immigrant workers, the short-term contracts offered by employees, the regular "360-degree" appraisals once you have got a job, the number of courses you are required to take to keep yourself up to speed in that job, the Americanization of the work-place, the loss of "paternal" employees and collegiate perspectives because of the influence of the multi-national companies in the labour market, the cocaine culture prevalent both in the work-place and in after-work socializing, the threat of AIDS.

"Against this you can balance advantages like maternity and paternity leave, carefully structured dismissal procedures which offer more protection than our generation had, and better health and safety standards. But all of the young people I know, i.e. my own children and those of my contemporaries who are in good jobs, absolutely flog themselves to death, well-paid though they may be."

My friend surely speaks from experience, of a steadily increasing daily pressure, surely global rather than just English. And what is that pressure? – Mammon.

Conclusion? A total – and global – way of life is stifling vocations just as it is disabling young men for fatherhood and young women for motherhood. Such a way of life is suicidal. And doomed. Young fathers, think. And act.

Kyrie eleison.