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My Finest Cutoffs

By Gary Shirley

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Andy looked in the mirror to give himself the "once over" before heading out the door to the most important event of his life. He finally had his chance to interview with Zenon Industries. Undoubtedly the finest company in his field, landing a job with Zenon meant unlimited career possibilities coupled with great security.

Andy had prepared for weeks to have all the right answers to potential interview questions. He had splurged on a quality business suit, Italian shoes and even a new briefcase. One thing he had learned long ago was to always dress one level above the position sought, so to project an image of promotability. Andy was pleased with his preparations, his appearance and his attitude. He was pumped, for this day was important and it deserved his best effort. As he headed out the door, Andy's seven-year-old son Colin promised that he and Mom would pray for Dad "all day long."

The hiring staff at Zenon experienced an interview with a true professional in top form. Andy did a stellar job. Driving home after the interview he reviewed everything in his mind. He was convinced that he came across well and that the job was as good as filled. Andy's confidence was soon rewarded, for on the following Friday he got the call. Zenon offered a package he could not believe. Besides a hefty raise and improved benefits, he would get the hoped-for company car and a signing bonus. Most definitely news worth celebrating.

Saturday brought a night on the town like he and his wife Karen had never had in their lives. A five-star meal, expensive seats at the theater, and dancing into the night. Everything was perfect. All of his sacrifices in the past made this accomplishment taste even sweeter. The future was bright and portended great things.

Sunday dawned and Andy crawled out of bed still basking in the glow of his good fortune. The family usually went to 10:45 Mass so that they had a bit of time to relax before heading out the door. Reflecting on his good fortune, Andy realized that the most important thank-you was yet to come. God had given him a golden moment and it was right to offer thanks in person. Stopping at the same mirror he used for the "once over," he silently nodded his approval for his chosen Sunday Mass attire.

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Andy had on his finest cutoff shorts, a T-shirt emblazoned with the logo of his favorite sports team and his best sneakers. Perfect. Once the Mass is over, Andy thought, we can roll right into the day. Maybe we'll have a "second celebration" of the new job with the entire family...a stop at Macaroni Grill for lunch, followed by ice cream. Hey, why not?

Enroute to church, Andy was feeling proud and grateful. He commented to his wife how very important this Mass was, for there was so much for which he needed to express gratitude. Hearing his Dad express, once again, how important a coming event was, Colin piped up with his usual, brutal candor. "Daddy," Colin said, "If Mass is important, just like the thing you did the other day, how come you aren't wearing that special suit again? Doesn't God like to see you dressed up too?"

Andy, the man with all the answers at Zenon, was speechless. In his mind he ran through all the comebacks he could make. Excuses like, "God only cares what is in our hearts" or "God isn't interested in outward appearance" or "God loves us no matter what we wear" were lame and unconvincing. Colin had managed, in his childhood innocence, to lay bare the truth. The boy's comment cut like a laser through the new hero of Zenon Industries. God, quite simply, was not worth the effort. Andy knew it was true. Zenon was worth a new suit, power tie and Italian shoes. The Maker of the universe merited cutoffs and a T-shirt. God got no better than the clothes that I would wear to change the oil in my car, Andy thought. He realized that his message was, "I am grateful, Lord, but not enough to raise you above the everyday, so I'll give thanks dressed like I just mowed the lawn."

Andy reflected on his week. He spent countless hours trying to make sure that his clothes sent the right message. He had "dressed for success." Only his best effort would do for Zenon. He imagined what would have happened if he had shown up at Zenon in his cutoffs. Probably the same thing that would occur if he met with a major client while donning his Speedo. If he knew anything, Andy knew that clothes did indeed send a powerful message. They say, in their silence, that, this event is worth the effort. Andy realized that not only did he insult God with his lack of effort, but he also sent the wrong message to his little boy.

Upon arriving home from Mass, the humbled executive decided to see just what the Church had to say about proper dress for Mass. In the Catechism of the Catholic Church, he found such guidance in the section devoted to the Eucharist, the "source and summit" of our faith. He reflected upon the words, "Bodily demeanor (gestures and clothing) ought to convey the respect, solemnity and joy of this moment when Christ becomes our guest." (CCC #1387) Andy found further insights in the section devoted to personal modesty: "Modesty is decency. It inspires one's choice of clothing...it inspires a way of life which makes it possible to resist the allurements of fashion and the pressures of prevailing ideologies. Modesty...exists as an intuition of the spiritual dignity proper to man." (CCC #2522-24)

Powerful reminders. Ideas that are lost in America today, Andy thought. The Church's insights made him reflect upon his youth when his whole family went to Mass in their "Sunday best." To appear in Church in anything less caused a scandal back then. Sunday was special, it was important, and it was holy. What happened? What have we done? Have we lost our sense of the sacred? Have we now "casualized" our culture to the point of a complete loss of decency? Is nothing set apart and sanctified? Andy recalled reading a recent article on how businesses now have several "levels" of casual attire to try and combat the various interpretations that are creeping into the workplace. Like many people in

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corporate America, he knew that once we opened the Pandora's Box of "casual" then everyone's personal interpretation had equal value, like it or not.

Andy reflected on the Catechism's words and on the message he sent to God, his fellow man and his son. Did his choice of clothing convey respect for the Real Presence? Was he bending to the "allurements of fashion" by pretending to honor God in his finest cutoffs? Did he kowtow to the "prevailing ideologies" by equating Sunday Mass attire with a morning of golf? Did the virtue of modesty really disappear or was it just bludgeoned into obscurity by a self-indulgent culture? Andy thought about how ironic it was that his old company's dress code prohibited cutoffs and T-shirts, but somehow he decided God did not care.

It was hard to imagine the confusion he sowed in his son Colin's mind. Here was an impressionable little boy who idolized his father. He was trying hard to understand how two events declared "important" by Dad were treated so differently. The sad part is, Andy knew there was really only one important thing. In his search for the proverbial "better life" he had forgotten its Giver.

The following Sunday the family was assembling for Mass. As his Dad rounded the corner to the kitchen, Colin spotted him and his face was wrinkled up with confusion. "Dad," he asked, "Why are you all dressed up? Do you have to go to work today?" "No," said Andy with a smile, "but I am going to have a long talk with my Boss and enjoy a banquet with Him. Ready to join me?"

Gary Shirley, his wife, and three children are members of St. Catherine of Siena Parish in Kennesaw, Georgia, where Gary serves as catechist in the adult education program.

The Creamy Taste Of Fudge!

By Mike Yeager

Fudge is a treat that everyone loves. It doesn't matter if you're young or old, the taste of a smooth, creamy piece of delicious Fudge appeals to everyone. Fudge, candy, Fudge, and sweets have been around for a long time and they still tickle the taste-buds of people. You're sure to be a hit with family and friends when offering them the finest quality Fudge you can find.

Delicious Fudges made from high quality cocoa beans and mixed with the proper amount of sweetener combine to create a mouth-watering treat that simply melts in your mouth with delight.

All Fudge lovers know that the right ingredients mixed with care and exactness produce a delicious Fudge truffle or flavorful sweet that are loved by everyone. We take great pride in the Fudge and chocolate we recommend, and have chosen from only the finest in the world.

Whether your looking for Fudge for a friend or a special treat for yourself, Fudge made from the best ingredients available is sure to taste fantastic. Sitting down with a treat that is only eaten because it tastes good is a luxury that everyone enjoys and deserves. We don't eat candy because we need to (well, maybe) we enjoy chocolate, candy and other treats because we can. Remember when you were

a kid and you couldn't wait to grow up and then you could eat whatever you wanted? Well, why not get started now?

Mike Yeager
Publisher

The Creamy Taste Of Fudge!
For The Very Finest In Watches, Get A Rolex Watch
Why You Should Choose Las Vegas As Your Next Vacation Spot
GPS Tracking – Why you shouldn't leave home without one!
Coffee From Kenya



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