



Setting Boundaries



Speaking truth will rarely earn you friends, but it will reveal who your true friends are and who are true friends of Christ.
Mark Hart

WHAT KIND OF BEHAVIOUR TYPICALLY ANNOYS YOU?

DO YOU FIND IT EASY TO COMMUNICATE YOUR ANNOYANCES TO OTHERS?

WATCH THIS VIDEO FROM FR MIKE SCHMITZ "SETTING BOUNDARIES FOR YOURSELF AND OTHERS" AND REFLECT ON THE QUESTIONS THAT FOLLOW



When it comes to others, what kind of behaviour do we get, according to Fr Mike?

Give an example to explain this theory (from the video, or from experience)



Fr Mike explains that we need to establish clear boundaries: what kind of difficulties can there be in this process?



What three steps are involved in setting boundaries with others?

1. Understand _____
2. Clearly _____ (this takes courage!)
3. Follow _____



Over to you! Someone who know is often dismissive of you and your opinions, especially in front of others. This bothers you a lot and you decide not to tolerate this behaviour any more. Role-play or write the kind of courageous boundary-setting conversation you might have with them:



SETTING BOUNDARIES



Why is it also true for ourselves that we get the behaviour we are willing to tolerate? Give an example to explain this.

What do we ultimately need to decide when it comes to how we live our lives?

What happens if we fall, or fail in our attempt?



Read Matthew 18:15-20



“We get the behaviour we are willing to tolerate.” It makes sense really, doesn't it? If we allow a friend or family member to be sarcastic or rude to us, they will continue to be sarcastic or rude. If we decide for ourselves that this is not acceptable, if we communicate it clearly and follow through with consequences, it can make a difference. We hope that their behaviour will change, but if not, something inside us can change as we make the decision and follow through.

What about ourselves though? What are we willing to tolerate in our own behaviour? Can we be a little quick to let ourselves off the hook and make excuses for lowering our standards or our expectations of ourselves? Possibly. There's a definite challenge in that for each of us this week. Is there something I'm not happy with in myself, some thing that I want to change, some standard I know I should reach or virtue I should practice, but I make excuses and settle for less, or even fall into sin? The good news is we're not on our own in any of this. The Holy Spirit can help us to understand what to tolerate (or not) in ourselves and others, give us the grace to set those boundaries and the strength to commit (or recommit if we fall!). The first we have to do is decide for change.



MISSION!

TAKE SOME TIME IN PRAYER AND REFLECTION THIS WEEK. IS THERE SOMEONE IN YOUR LIFE YOU NEED TO HAVE A COURAGEOUS CONVERSATION AND SET BOUNDARIES WITH? OR IS THERE SOMETHING WITHIN YOURSELF THAT YOU NEED TO STOP TOLERATING AND CHANGE? MAKE A RESOLUTION TO WORK ON IT THIS WEEK.



PRAYER TIME!

Jesus, you want me to be the best version of myself. Help me to establish boundaries with others where I need to, so that both I and my friendship with others can flourish. Show me where I need to cut out certain behaviours in my own life too, and give me the strength to change. Amen.



CREATE A PLAYLIST TO LISTEN TO AS YOU REFLECT ON CHANGE

- Steffany Gretzinger: I Spoke Up
- Bethel Music: Raise a Hallelujah
- Christopher: Leap of Faith
- Steffany Gretzinger: Letting Go
- Casting Crowns: The Change in Me
- Jeremy Camp: Empty Me



“If you're not changing it, you're choosing it.”

WHAT DO YOU THINK THIS MOTTO MEANS? DISCUSS.