



Digital Commons@

Loyola Marymount University
LMU Loyola Law School

Spiritual Essays

Center for Ignatian Spirituality

2011

Why Me?

Fr. Randy Roche

Loyola Marymount University

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalcommons.lmu.edu/spiritualessays>



Part of the [Catholic Studies Commons](#), and the [Religious Thought, Theology and Philosophy of Religion Commons](#)

Repository Citation

Roche, Fr. Randy, "Why Me?" (2011). *Spiritual Essays*. 151.

<https://digitalcommons.lmu.edu/spiritualessays/151>

This Essay is brought to you for free and open access by the Center for Ignatian Spirituality at Digital Commons @ Loyola Marymount University and Loyola Law School. It has been accepted for inclusion in Spiritual Essays by an authorized administrator of Digital Commons@Loyola Marymount University and Loyola Law School. For more information, please contact digitalcommons@lmu.edu.

Why Me?

Whether a child directs the question to a teacher who silenced him or her while others were also misbehaving, or one of us aims the same question towards God when confronted with a particularly difficult challenge, the words that often express a sad complaint are, "Why me?" If we believe that we are being treated unfairly, picked out arbitrarily for suffering while others are given preferred treatment, we might easily take offence. Perceived injustice hurts, and cannot be explained away, though we can find ways to retain our integrity and move on.

The same question, with the same words, can be used in an entirely different context, to convey an experience of gratitude and even awe. From the perspective of being chosen for wholly undeserved gifts, or being selected from among a great number of apparently equally worthy candidates for special privileges, we can ask: "Why me?"

When we use the pair of words, we are more likely to be expressing our feelings of hurt or of gratitude than to be seeking for an understanding that might perhaps satisfy our minds, but not address our hearts – unless we reflect on what we mean.

I prefer to consider the mystery of unmerited gifts rather than to spend time brooding over the many unexplainable sufferings that occur among us. I ask the question of myself, for the sake of encouraging reflection upon experience, and of God, so that I might open myself to whatever inspired thoughts might come to mind: "Why me?"

Why have I learned, and come to believe and to act (at least some of the time,) that people are more important than things, and that life is about love, not power, control, or possessions? Some persons apparently reject what I and many who read these words hold as essential, so the question is real, and it is at least partly a gracious mystery: "Why me?" I am grateful for all the persons in my life, from family and friends, to colleagues of all kinds and also many writers, speakers, and doers, whose words and deeds supported and still encourage me in the way of life that I choose. But how is it that I have been so blest? I cannot say that I am or have ever been entitled to all that I have received from others and what I have learned from experiences both painful and uplifting.

I enjoy the pleasure of "standing before God" and saying, with no expectation of receiving an explanation, Why me? Why not accept gifts of trust, of hope, and of love when and however they become possible, rather than insisting on hard-hearted, headache-causing thoughts about the lack of

justice in the world and in some of the events that touch our lives? If we care to thoroughly examine all aspects of "injustice," we might find that we are being given more capabilities, more understanding, more learning from experience, more growth through setbacks and successes than is logically just. Even more, how could it ever be termed "fair" in any weighing of merit based on our thoughts, words, and deeds that we would be welcome to continue being who we are, without limitation, after going through death?

Why me?