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## Honest to Self

Fr. Randy Roche

*Loyola Marymount University*

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## Honest to Self

Children used to say "honest to God" to support their statements in the face of others' doubts. For adults, in this culture where appearances are sometimes promoted over reality, we have to choose between denial and honesty even within ourselves. Rather than calling God as a witness to the truth of what we believe, we ourselves affirm or deny the values upon which we base our lives.

Honesty in our own internal thinking is essential for mental, emotional, and spiritual integrity even before we consider relationships with others. For example, if we tell ourselves that we are not really tired while we are practically falling asleep on our feet, we will very likely continue to function, but with greatly diminished efficiency, and possibly with harm to ourselves or others. Honest assessment of fatigue does not require that we stop all action, but enables us to judge properly what we can and cannot accomplish now, and to plan for the future.

Honesty, like love, is spiritual. We cannot buy even a tiny bit of honesty, but its presence or absence in decision-making radically affects the outcome of all that we believe and do. God is our partner in every honest choice we make. The movement inside us both enabling and inciting us to speak truth to ourselves and to others is of God's ongoing creation. If we reflect on our struggles to choose reality over fantasy, we might recognize that the inclination toward light, truth, and goodness which is wholly within us is yet not of our creation, but a mini-experience of transcendence.

The exercise of honesty is a spiritual component of every-day decision-making. We can observe our own dialogue about honesty by attending to the words of our thought processes. We might even vocalize some expressions as we negotiate motives and reasons prior to making a decision. When we do finally affirm some inner words as our truth we act as the sole judge of our inner court, handing down a decision. We might or might not take into account the "constitution" that is written in our hearts: foundational beliefs, occasionally amended as we learn from experiences.

A little example of the workings of honesty: Someone has made a mess, and left it. Besides some inner comments we might make about the other person's possible up-bringing in a barn, we have a decision to make. What is our truth in this particular set of circumstances? No one is watching, and no one will know whether we choose to put

things in order or leave it all for someone else. No one outside could look at the situation and say with assurance whether or not we should or should not take action. But within, we know. This mysterious knowing, upon which we make our decision to pick up the mess or to leave things as they are, might involve some brief discussion or consideration. But we know, honestly, which is the right decision for us at the time.

Honesty is an amazing, useful, and at times awesome gift of God experienced within us.