



July 24, 2022

Raquette Lake Chapel Sunday Blast

“Just Because You Can Doesn’t Mean You Should”

Scientists at the time the movie Jurassic Park was made were getting closer to being able to manipulate DNA in the real world, and both the book and the movie captured emerging concerns that playing God with nature’s genetic code could lead to devastating consequences. In the movie Dr. Ian Malcolm, played by Jeff Goldblum, declared, “Your scientists were so preoccupied with whether they could, they didn’t stop to think if they should.”

This piece of conventional wisdom begs the question: “Are there some things that we should not do, even if we are able to do them?”

“We knew we could do it, but we didn’t think about the consequences”

The Jurassic Park scientists took advantage of an imbalance of power (scientific knowledge) to insist on their way while others who were powerless and didn’t have the scientific to challenge the scientists’ work. This is very typical in situations where someone should have said, “I know you can do that, but should you?”



The law of unintended consequences states that

actions of people (and especially governments, large corporations, and so forth) always have effects that are unanticipated or “unintended.” This is where we can turn to St. Paul’s first letter to the Corinthians to see this problem at work in the early church.

“Don’t be a stumbling block for others”

The Sunday Blast three weeks ago brought up the issue the new church in Corinth raised with Paul about eating food sacrificed to idols. This week we dig a little deeper into what is behind Paul’s teaching. Part of Paul’s response was “Be careful, however, that the exercise of your rights does not become a stumbling block to the weak.” (1 Cor 8:9)

Paul’s teaching urges us to seriously consider how we behave. We might summarize 1 Cor 8:1-13 and Romans 14:13-23 like this:

For the kingdom of God is not food and drink or what people consider to be right religious practices, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit. By living and being guided by the health of the church and not our individual prospects



Let us keep in our prayers: the repose of Doretta’s soul and comfort for her family; the repose of Matthew’s soul and comfort for his family; those suffering from extreme weather; victims of violence; those suffering from disease; those mourning for loved ones.