**SLOTH**

It is a shame when an animal’s characteristics actually become the name of a sin, but the poor, slow moving, hanging on a tree animal named the sloth has demonstrated the point of the sin of sloth or laziness. Obviously, all ages have had to deal with the concept of laziness, and since it is one of the Seven Deadly Sins, it has been discussed for millennia. Laziness has never been viewed as a virtue, but once again - we live in a culture where laziness is not only very evident but it seems to be celebrated: couch potatoes, “chilling out,” “vegging,” and non-stop video games, are now acceptable forms of behavior and even seem to be a strange reward for unproductive days!

It should be no surprise that sloth is yet again another sin that could be termed a “sin of the flesh.” Many people who live lazy lives seem to exist under the concept that all work is done by other people. Once again, one may rationalize their laziness with creative excuses. Here is one of the progressive problems: Why I have failed to do something or don’t want to do something begins with an excuse, which is often a lie, and then is repeated as if it were the truth. It is as if we are truly afraid to admit why we fail to do things: “I just didn’t feel like it” or “I am just lazy.” “It is important that the task be done, but don’t expect me to do it.” “It’s too cold to go to church, but I don’t want to forget to buy a new heavier coat for the next outdoor football game on a Sunday in January.” “I wasn’t brought up in a home where people worked around the house, so I don’t know how to change a light bulb. “It is quite possible that these same people were not brought up with cell phones and computers, but somehow - because they wanted to use these devices - they learned how to use them.

It’s all about what I want to do. What is sad about sloth is in the area of excuses: If you want me to do something for you, my reason not to is an extremely justifiable and rational reason. If I ask the same of you, and you fail to do it - you have a bad excuse. In this narcissism of sloth, we offer good reasons as to why we do not do something, but we are sick of everybody else’s excuses as to why they do not do something for us. As is the case with the other Seven Deadly Sins, we create rules that govern our behavior and rules that judge other peoples’ behavior. In the end, we can discover numerous reasons to justify our laziness, but while others may believe us, we really are not fooling ourselves —-or God.

What would have happened to us if Jesus had skipped Maundy Thursday and Good Friday because He didn’t feel like going? Sometimes a good check is to ask this question: “Do I expect as much of myself as I do of others?”