

# The pick of the litter

(As God sees—and how we should see)

## REFLECTIONS FROM FR. ROSS

I received this little story (Puppies for Sale) from several people. In these days when we are bombarded with advertisements promising us that if we buy this product or use that product, we are going to look like the fabulous individuals and models that they use to promote their products.

*A farmer had some puppies he needed to sell. He painted a sign advertising the 4 pups. And set about nailing it to a post on the edge of his yard. As he was driving the last nail into the post, he felt a tug on his overalls. He looked down into the eyes of a little boy.*

*"Mister," he said, "I want to buy "one of your puppies."*

*"Well," said the farmer, as he rubbed the sweat off the back of his neck, "These puppies come from fine parents and cost a good deal of money."*

*The boy dropped his head for a moment. Then reaching deep into his pocket, he pulled out a handful of change and held it up to the farmer. "I've got thirty-nine cents. Is that enough to take a look?"*

*"Sure," said the farmer. And with that he let out a whistle. "Here, Dolly!" he called. Out from the doghouse and down the ramp ran Dolly followed by four little balls of fur.*

*The little boy pressed his face against the chain link fence. His eyes danced with delight. As the dogs made their way to the fence, the little boy noticed something else stirring inside the doghouse. Slowly another little ball appeared, this one noticeably smaller. Down the ramp it slid. Then in a some what awkward manner, the little pup began hobbling toward the others, doing its best to catch up.*

*"I want that one," the little boy said, pointing to the runt. The farmer knelt down at the boy's side and said, "Son, you don't want that puppy. He will never be able to run and play with you like these other dogs would."*

*With that the little boy stepped back from the fence, reached down, and began rolling up one leg of his trousers. In doing so he revealed a steel brace running down both sides of his leg attaching itself to a specially made shoe.*

*Looking back up at the farmer, he said, "You see sir, I don't run too well myself, and he will need someone who understands."*

*With tears in his eyes, the farmer reached down and picked up the little pup. Holding it carefully he handed it to the little boy.*

*"How much?" asked the little boy. "No charge," answered the farmer, "There's no charge for love."*

Most of us are never going to look like those "beautiful people" that we see on TV. Let's face it—we are going to remain ordinary people with our physical, spiritual and emotional flaws and imperfections, our pimples, wrinkles, balding, sagging, etc., etc. The more we can accept that, the more we can be supportive of each other and counteract the false propaganda that we are constantly receiving.

We can help each other by focusing on what truly makes a person beautiful, that is, the simple fact that they exist and that they are God's beloved child and a sister or brother to us. We help people feel secure from within and that their self-esteem and dignity does not come from things they have or how they compare to others. This is probably one of the most important aspects of ministry, whether it be an official one or not. This is crucial to the role of being a good parent, helping children to experience their goodness from within. So, let's all do some real advertizing. [fr.ross@verizon.net](mailto:fr.ross@verizon.net)

