



*Favorite Passages and
Quotes of Brother
Eugene Trzeciński*

Compiled By Nikolai De Leo and Andre Grillon

Introduction to the Noble Mind Project

The Noble Mind Project was conceived at a Houston’s restaurant on Miracle Mile in late May 2010. As we were discussing some of his teachings from our class 5 years ago, we spontaneously decided to ask for a meeting. One meeting turned into two and then before we knew it we had spent a summer learning from a “living Emerson,” as we liked to call him.

It is with great joy that we are now working to digitize all of his works. Some are a more decidedly difficult read than others but all of them have changed us forever.

This is just a selection of our favorite passages but we encourage you to check out www.anoblemind.com for a full collection of his works.

- Nikolai De Leo and Andre Grillon

Introduction to Philosophical Inquiries

The ideas presented below are designed to inspire the reader to think, to question and to consider profound thoughts that have been perplexing man for centuries.

All the material requires serious and deep concentration. There are no quick and easy answers. The fundamental attitude is an open and receptive mind. Question not to deny but to understand.

The ultimate goal is to search for **truth and beauty**. May these notes help the reader seek this magnificent goal.

- Brother Eugene

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Nikolai's Favorite Passages

- For love defies time – always has, and always will. And if love is founded on time, it is physical, emotional – and not love, but affection – a sweet regard.
- Nothing worthwhile in life is sudden. We wait for birth. We wait for love. We wait for life to reveal its meaning, year by year, experience by experience. Waiting is the law of life, the measure of love.
- To believe one can have all immediately, so to speak, in a hurry, is to confine the mystery of life and the breath of the Divine to a moment or a year, or a decade. When men cease waiting – a type of faith – their hopes die, their dreams are dispelled and their life is over.
- We have become so beguiled with the compulsion “to do” that many of us consider it a waste of time “to be”. So often it is argued that it is unproductive “to be”, that one must always make something of himself, which generally means that one must make money. How do we judge a human being as a success or a person of worth? How many of us have the courage and candor to put into words what it is which makes us pay more attention to one person rather than another? When we speak our foolishness out loud it appears even more absurd. Why do we “cultivate” some people and disregard others?
- Not only personal relationships but life itself is mishandled. Why is it stupid to walk in the rain? Why do we neglect autumn or await the seasons with resignation rather than anticipation? The luxuries we claim we cannot afford are the luxuries of existence, the luxury of sensing our aliveness and allowing it to express itself. If we would compose the epitaph by which we want to be remembered, many of us would realize the success we prefer in life is not the success we are seeking.
- Deep thinking is impossible when life becomes an unimportant value. Devotion dies when love is desired but never given. Poetry perishes in the postponement of dreams until the day when they shall favor us with practical results. The fact that we have the capacity to communicate with another human being on the deepest levels of his life means less to some than the next promotion or a more spacious driveway. The message of the Gospel is this: no achievement is worth as much as the mystery by which one person comes to know and to love another.
- We have a tendency to dismiss Christ as a dreamer or to dismiss him as divine. We write off, at times, the human effort and the human achievement of the life of Christ by resorting to his sonship with God. Some of us disregard the human life of Christ so that we might remain complacent, calling ourselves his disciples, repeating his words, but avoiding his lifestyle.
- Hopes derive from a reasonable foundation and give life. Wishes are flights of fancy, momentary and inconsistent desires; they are conjectures of what might have been, fashioned sometimes at the precise moment when we know there is no hope of their fulfillment. Dreams refer to the visions of life with which we live, visions composed of hopes and wishes, visions constant and consistent enough for us to work for their realization and build a kingdom upon them.

- Never to dream, not to have visions is not to live. To dream what shall never come to pass is an indication that we have more life in us than one lifetime can exhaust, enough hope in us for infinite dreaming.
- Unless he is spoiled, man is a natural poet. Life sings in him, rejoices and glorifies in him. Man is poet enough to count the stars although knowing their number can do him no good. He is forever struggling up a mountain and plunging into the sea so that he might behold the wonder and greatness of things.
- Life never really begins for the human heart until it beholds beauty and truth and deems it worth remembering.
- On the day when we first utter a word, something significant has occurred. We struggle an entire lifetime to say what is inside us.
- As life goes on its way, we use everything at our disposal to make ourselves clear. Gestures and words, touches and tears, sexual love and poetry, labor and flowers, music and candles, and embraces tell others we are here. In these efforts, we say what we are like, ask for understanding, remind others that we love and hurt, that we need and dream, that we are bewildered and joyful, decisive and immediately uncertain, desperate and suddenly independent!
- A CHILD sees no limits. He wonders why anything is impossible. A child believes in infinity more easily than he does in barriers. A man whose vision is composed of prayer, devotion, hope and faith, sees beyond the limits men set around life in selfishness, in fear, in cowardice.
- We want to be identified with a flower. This has become the symbol of “peace people.” Are we afraid to be identified with the sublime beauty of colossal mountains, surging waves, and ecstatic lightning? Is it because these are bordering on the eternal?
- It is a tragedy to allow myself to drift through school without effort, without growth, and without a goal. This is a real scandal. I have met the enemy and it is I.
- “Someday, after mastering the winds, the waves, the tides and gravity, we shall harness for God the energies of Love, and then, for the second time in the history of the world, man will discover fire.” - *Teilhard de Chardin*
- A person is constantly saying "I" - but this I does not represent what he really is. It is a prey of partial, superficial "I", constantly changing to whatever circumstances are around. The essence of "I", the wholeness of self, rarely manifests itself.
- Where reason fails, faith supplies.
- Beauty stops motion.

Andre's Favorite Passages

- If we will imagine the past to have been better than it was, believe that the future will be palpably perfect, and inflate the present with voluptuousness, passion, or mere infatuation, then we will have carved ourselves a little niche in the universe where we can thrive.
- Just as one studies a Ruben or a da Vinci, it is not possible to understand them unless one understand the times in which they lived, the social, political, economic and religious aspects that existed. These were not independent of the painting. So with the world. It is not independent of man.
- To be or not to be (the fullness of man) that is MY question!
- Everyone can distinguish quite clearly between the moments in which he is acting and those in which he is acted upon.
- Each one must realize the meaning of his existence (the real one). Therein lies his personal destiny.
- Every human life involves an unfathomable mystery. Man is the riddle of the universe. And the riddle of man is his endowment with personal capacities.
- When I find something in another - a characteristic that is me in another, why do I feel drawn to that person? What union brings the two together -- and why? Is it because I have found something greater than either of us in both of us? And this is the unifying factor? Is it faith - hope - love?"
- There are interior turning points in everyone's life. We think of these as moments of truth, moments when we now know something to be deeply true for us, the acceptance of which will change our life.
- The fullness of his "yes" is known only when he understands the implications of his "no" and the freedom he has to utter either. A commitment to any ideal, any action, any way of life, or to love, is rich and authentic when it is done with the fullness of the human act. His humanity, then, takes on a new dimension and, not circumscribed by the instant, plunges him into the cosmic reality far greater than himself, individually or collectively.
- Man is not alone in time. His every action reverberates, affecting the greater, more universal reality ... mankind.
- Time is because I am. Time is a relationship which conceives and executes with another being. There is no time between stars or stars and void. That is why a billion years in the life of a star really makes no sense. That is a relationship which man gives. The same goes for a millisecond. Time is mind oriented. It is a consciousness of a relationship.

- Poetry perishes in the postponement of dreams until the day when they shall favor us with practical results.
- As forceful as the urge to live is the desire to be remembered.
- Why is it stupid to walk in the rain?
- Music is the space between the notes. Thinking is the silence between the words. Thinking is found in the gaps between explanations. Thinking has everything to do with depth and nothing to do with exactitude.
- God is not someone who grants our wishes; He is someone who fulfills our hopes.
- We are loved when we are no longer frightened with ourselves.
- Maturity advances in proportion as my life decenters from the clamorous immediacy of acceptance, the body, social acclaim, egoism uncontrollable.
- The achievement of maturity is found in very few people. Actually, from the point of view of ontology and philosophy, this is an impossibility.
- How to accept ill-fortune, how to live with it and not be afraid of it or run away from it. Not that we welcome it, but when it does come, not to fall apart, curse it, seek false escape from it or blame either ourselves, others or circumstances – when frequently it is the normal course of events in the life of a person. Many times our proper use of it, understanding of it and acceptance of it not only makes it lighter, but frequently lessens its intensity and impact. There is a serious need that we restore to its proportionate importance our power of personal response in regard to suffering and its impact upon our lives ... I take it as bad luck, an evil, something that must be avoided because it will, otherwise, destroy me... my inner self and deeper consciousness. But will it? Does suffering destroy man – or does it ennoble him – make him mature, see things in a greater light, perhaps a more objective picture and more realistic?
- Why are we so frequently victims – and not masters of destiny? Cowards die many times – the valiant die but once.
- The wonders of what we can do in the universe. How glorious is man! Really, what have I done with my life? What contributing force to good, to a happier home, better attitude in my house, in school, on the team?
- The world is already there. We do not invent days, months, and years.
- And further, God wills that they be their own providence. They are to determine, freely, their aims, choose their own means, discover His plan and fulfill it with love. Man alone inaugurates time for himself. He is his own providence, because he must choose distance, his end, and fulfill it. But he can do it only through time. God inaugurates cosmic time that it may reach its end; but by God's generosity - man too, inaugurates cosmic time for his own fulfillment.

God gives time to man more than to any other creature, that he may freely fashion the means of his fulfillment.

- This brings in again, the leading question: What are my greatest possessions? What are my manly qualities? How do I contribute to life and enrich it? How creative am I?
- To use Dostoyevsky's phrase: People are people and not the keys of a piano.
- To think in the abstract, the concrete, to have emotions, to sense joy, sorrow, consternation, apprehension, to have a primo-genetic thought – to see man's reaction to something and the multiple number of ways in which he can react ... What a marvel!
- It seems almost against reason to admit that the evolution of the universe has tended for so many millions of years toward the emergence of the spiritual, the self-consciousness only to relapse into nothingness. My whole being protests against a hypothesis that can only abase and humiliate reality and diminish its intelligibility in which I believe so firmly.
- Why am I? What is this I?
- What is this motion within me that keeps me restlessly striving for something - for something - which most of the time I do not know, understand, and perhaps fear?
- Is the greatness of myself so immense that it would crush the being "I" if self-contained and thus must express itself through love and thus relieve the burden and so "share"?
- A real person achieves a high degree of unity within himself. He does not remain split and scattered but gets himself together into wholeness and coherence.
- "Happiness" is essentially a state of going somewhere, wholeheartedly, one-directionally, without regret or reservation. To live a fractionally and flustered life, to feel pulled apart and at loose ends, to be all at odds with oneself, is to be unhappy.
- And so is his great strength - and men as this were great and did magnificent deeds in their lifetime. They feared no man because they did not fear themselves.
- To mature... what animal can say: I wish to mature, to grow to the fullness of all the powers within me? Not being able to discern its powers – it cannot improve. But I?
- Am I born from within?
- People who deepen their lives soon discover their harmony with all reality, attune themselves to the fount of being. A sort of ascensional force begins to work within them.

Something To Think About...

1. Give people **more** than they expect and do it cheerfully.
2. Memorize your favorite poem.
3. Don't believe all you hear, don't spend all you have and don't sleep all you want.
4. When you say, "I love you" – mean it.
5. When you say, "I'm sorry," look the person in the eye.
6. Never laugh at anyone's dreams.
7. Love deeply and passionately. You might get hurt but it's the only way to live life completely.
8. In disagreements, fight fairly. No name calling.
9. Don't judge people by their relatives.
10. Talk slowly and think quickly.
11. When someone asks you a question you don't want to answer, smile and ask: "Why do you want to know?"
12. Remember that great love and great achievements involve great risk.
13. Call your mom.
14. Say, "God bless you," when you hear someone sneeze.
15. When you lose, don't lose the lesson.
16. Remember the three R's: **Respect** for others; **Respect** for self; **Responsibility** for all your actions.
17. Don't let a little dispute ruin a great friendship
18. When you realize you've made a mistake, take **immediate** steps to correct it.
19. Smile when picking up the phone. The caller will hear it in your voice.
20. Spend some time alone.
21. Embrace change but don't let go of your values.
22. Remember that silence is sometimes the best answer.
23. Read more books and watch less TV.
24. Live a good and honorable life. Then when you get older and look back, you'll enjoy it a second time.
25. Trust in God but lock your car.

26. A **loving atmosphere** in your home is so important. Do all you can to create a tranquil and harmonious home.
27. In disagreements with loved ones, deal with the current situation. **Don't bring up the past.**
28. Read between the lines.
29. Share your knowledge. It's the way to achieve immortality.
30. Be gentle with Earth.
31. **Pray.** There's immeasurable power in it.
32. Never interrupt when you're being flattered.
33. Mind your own business.
34. Once a year, go somewhere you've never been.
35. If you make a lot of money, put it to use helping others while you are living. That is wealth's greatest satisfaction.
36. Remember that not getting what you want is sometimes a stroke of luck.
37. Judge your success by what you had to give up in order to get it.
38. Remember that your character is your destiny.

We shall become Christians on that day when...

- Sunshine means more to us than a further acquisition
- The children of the world excite us at least as much as its rulers
- We use our hearts to measure the worth of a human being
- Greed or pride do not lead us to friendship but only love
- We are joyful because so many people are in love rather than because so many people are affluent
- We learn to make music and poetry, make love and peace
- The sight of the sea makes us dance for joy rather than the purchase of a new car
- Christ speaks to us by his values rather than his words
- We laugh and sing for the right reasons and when we weep not because we have lost something but because we were given so much

About Brother Eugene Trzeczieski



Eighty-two year old Marist Brother and teacher, Br. Eugene Trzeczieski, has worked at Christopher Columbus High School for the last 43 years. Br. Eugene became a Marist Brother at age 17, as soon as he graduated from high school. He started his teaching career in 1950 at New York's St. Ann's Academy and later taught at Archbishop Molloy High School, NY, and worked at the Marist Brothers Training House in Esopus, NY, as the Director of Novices. Over the years he has served Columbus as Academic Dean, Treasurer, Teacher of Latin, Philosophy, Humanities, and English. He was also a key leader in Columbus extra-curricular activities, moderating the National Honor Society for 25 years, creating the school's Student Activities Committee, and founding the Columbus Arts Society for Adults and the Erasmus Culture Club for students. For years he also was in charge of the gardening and landscaping of the school's campus, a job he loved because of his great passion for nature.

Br. Eugene taught at Columbus from 1968 until 2010. Thousands of alumni from the last five decades remember him most for his famous 12thgrade "Philosophy of Being" class, which he taught for 43 years straight. In fact, Br. Eugene holds the title of the teacher who taught at Columbus for the most number of years. Many alumni will also remember that Br. Eugene enlivened the campus with his beloved pet, Brandy, a St. Bernard that won the hearts of all the students and became the school's mascot.

Although he no longer teaches, Br. Eugene is still very actively engaged at Columbus, handling all of the school's paper copying and keeping the school archives, a collection that he started in 1968 and that today contains hundreds of bound books and files which he neatly organizes. It was Br. Eugene who came up with the idea to publish the school's first history book to commemorate the school's 50th Anniversary in 2008. He wrote the book entitled "50 Years Exploring Christopher Columbus High School" with co-author and fellow teacher, Mr. John Lynskey.

Around Columbus Br. Eugene is respected and loved by faculty, alumni, and students. He is known as a wise and gentle man who is demanding, kind, and inspiring. He always referred to his students as gentlemen, and never found the need to send a student to detention. Early in his career he came up with a quote that he began teaching to his students; "A mind made noble, leads a noble life." It has been his motto ever since.