

Go Deep!

Session 6

“Fiat voluntas tua...”



Luke 18: 9 – 14

“He then addressed this parable to those who were convinced of their own righteousness and despised everyone else – "Two people went up to the temple area to pray; one was a Pharisee and the other was a tax collector.

The Pharisee took up his position and spoke this prayer to himself, 'O God, I thank you that I am not like the rest of humanity--greedy, dishonest, adulterous--or even like this tax collector. I fast twice a week, and I pay tithes on my whole income.'



Luke 18: 9 – 14

But the tax collector stood off at a distance and would not even raise his eyes to heaven but beat his breast and prayed, 'O God, be merciful to me a sinner.'

I tell you, the latter went home justified, not the former; for everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and the one who humbles himself will be exalted.”



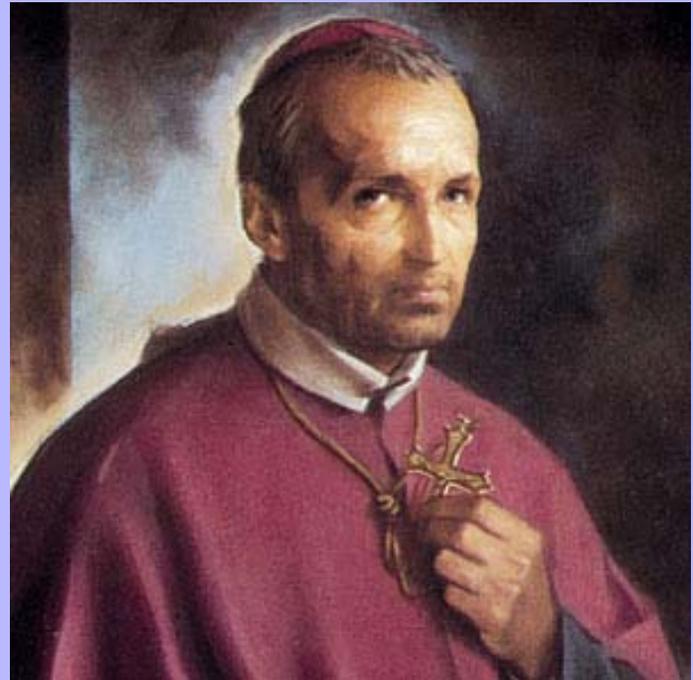
#2. *Avoiding Self-Reliance*

“Our blessed father [Francis] would say: "Too much confidence makes one guard too little against the enemy. If the devil can get but one hair from a man, he will soon make it grow into a beam. Even if after many years he still has not made him fall whom he has tempted, he is not put out over the delay, as long as he catches him in the end. For this is his (the devil) business, and he is busy about nothing else by day or by night."” *Thomas of Celano*



St. Alphonsus de Ligouri

“To obtain perseverance in good, we must not trust in our resolutions and in the promises we have made to God; if we trust in our own strength, we are lost. All our hope of preserving the grace of God must be placed in the merits of Jesus Christ, and thus, trusting in his help, we shall persevere till death, though we were attacked by all our enemies in earth and hell.”



“Imitation of Christ”

“My child, renounce self and you shall find Me. Give up your own self-will, your possessions, and you shall *always* gain. For once you resign yourself *irrevocably*, greater grace will be given you. ...Forsake yourself, renounce yourself and you shall enjoy great inward peace. Give all for all. Ask nothing, demand nothing in return. Trust purely and without hesitation in Me, and you shall possess Me...”

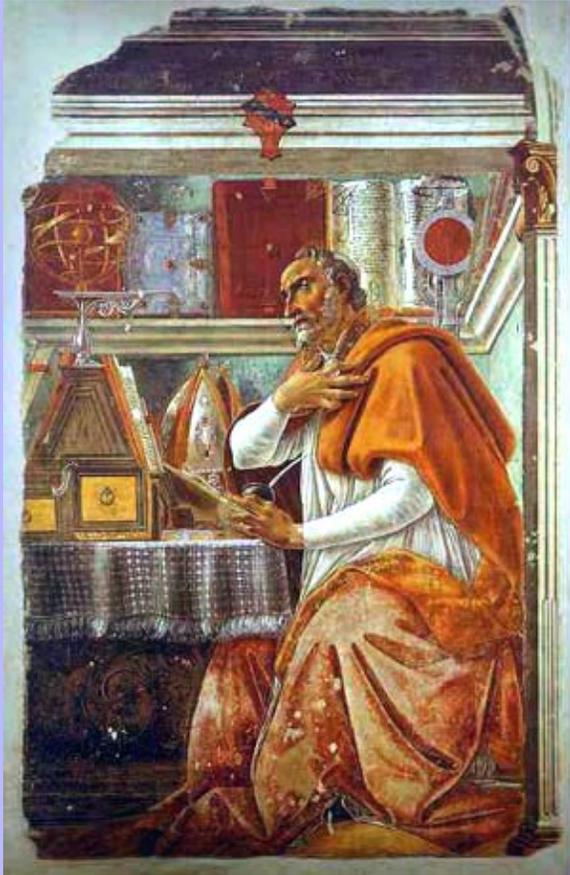


“Imitation of Christ”

“Strive for this, pray for this, desire this -- to be stripped of all selfishness and naked to follow the naked Jesus, to die to self and live forever for Me. Then all vain imaginations, all wicked disturbances and superfluous cares will vanish. Then also immoderate fear will leave you and inordinate love will die. ...[Do this] always, at every hour, in small matters as well as great. [make no exceptions].”



St. Augustine



“I give you one counsel; that you don’t think through your own strength or efforts you can arrive. For reaching this stage is beyond our power; if you try to reach it, the devotion you have will have grown cold. But with simplicity and humility, which will achieve everything, say: *fiat voluntas tua* (your will be done).”

Three Ways to Recognize & Overcome Self-Reliance

1. Prayer –

“There is a temptation which perennially besets every spiritual journey and pastoral work: that of thinking that the results depend on our ability to act and to plan. God of course asks us really to cooperate with his grace, and therefore invites us to invest all our resources of intelligence and energy in serving the cause of the Kingdom. But it is fatal to forget that "without Christ we can do nothing" (*John 15:5*). It is prayer which roots us in this truth. It constantly reminds us of the primacy of Christ and, in union with Him, the primacy of the interior life and of holiness. (*JPII, NMI 38*)



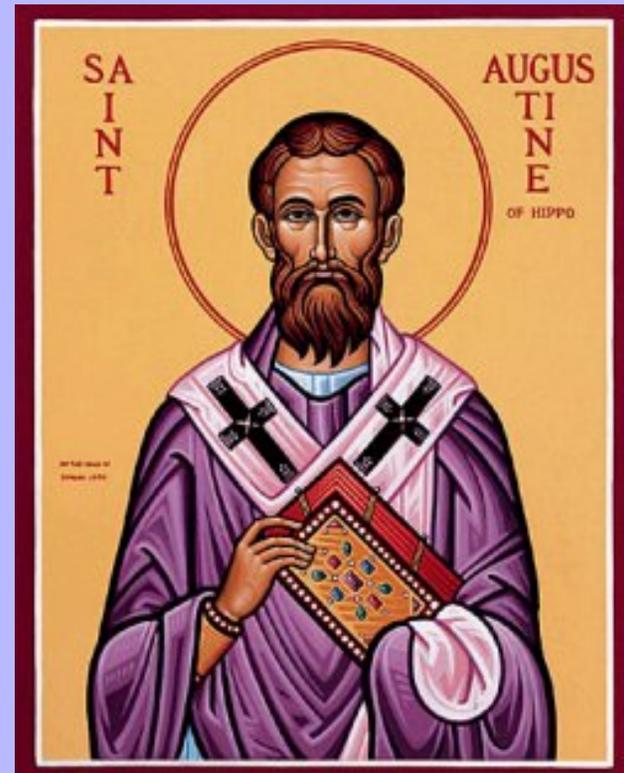
Three Ways to Recognize & Overcome Self-Reliance

2. A “Holy Suspicion of Ourselves –

“For by grace you have been saved through faith, and this is not from you; it is the gift of God; it is not from works, so no one may boast. For we are His handiwork, created in Christ Jesus for the good works that God has prepared in advance, that we should live in them.” ***Ephesians 2: 8-10***



“Are you incapable of doing what these men and women have done? Do you think them capable of achieving this by their own resources and not by the Lord their God? ...Why are you relying on yourself, only to find yourself unreliable? Cast yourself upon Him, do not be afraid. He will not withdraw Himself so that you fall. Make the leap without anxiety, He will catch you and heal you.”



Three Ways to Recognize & Overcome Self-Reliance

3. Understand that we *cannot* merit salvation –

“This desire could certainly appear daring if one were to consider how weak and imperfect I was, and how, after seven years in the religious life, I still am weak and imperfect. I always feel, however, the same bold confidence of becoming a great saint because I don’t count on my own merits, since I have none, but trust in Him who is Virtue and Holiness. God alone, content with my weak efforts, will raise me to Himself and make me a saint, clothing me in His infinite merits.”

St. Therese of Lisieux



#3. *Encounter Jesus Christ*

“It is therefore obvious that our principal attention must be given to the liturgy, “the summit towards which the Church's action tends and at the same time the source from which comes all her strength.” **NMI 35**

“...I therefore wish to insist that *sharing in the Eucharist* should really be *the heart of Sunday* for every baptized person. It is a fundamental duty, to be fulfilled not just in order to observe a precept but as something felt as essential to a truly informed and consistent Christian life.” **NMI 36**



Eucharist and Confession

“Anyone who desires to receive Christ in Eucharistic Communion must be in the state of grace. Anyone aware of having sinned mortally must not receive communion without having received absolution in the Sacrament of Penance.” **CCC 1415**

“It is this *face of Christ* that must be rediscovered through the Sacrament of Penance, which for the faithful is "the ordinary way of obtaining forgiveness and the remission of serious sins committed after Baptism."

NMI 37



Daily, Personal Prayer...



Personal Prayer: An encounter with Jesus Christ

“When we pray, do we speak from the height of our pride and will, or "out of the depths" of a humble and contrite heart? He who humbles himself will be exalted; humility is the foundation of prayer, Only when we humbly acknowledge that "we do not know how to pray as we ought," are we ready to receive freely the gift of prayer. "Man is a beggar before God."” **CCC 2559**



Personal Prayer: An encounter with Jesus Christ

“Through his Word, God speaks to man. By words, mental or vocal, our prayer takes flesh. Yet it is most important that the heart should be present to Him to whom we are speaking in prayer: ‘Whether or not our prayer is heard depends not on the number of words, but on the fervor of our souls.’”

St. John Chrysostom



Mental Prayer: Encountering Christ

- A “deeper” form of prayer than vocal prayer
- A “quest” in which one seeks to know and do the will of God.
- Aided by Catholic works (esp. Sacred Scripture) **CCC 2708**
- ***NMI 33 (Review)***



Mental Prayer: Encountering Christ

“There are as many and varied methods of meditation as there are spiritual masters. *Christians owe it to themselves to develop the desire to meditate regularly*, lest they come to resemble the three first kinds of soil in the parable of the sower. But a method is only a guide; the important thing is to advance, with the Holy Spirit, along the one way of prayer: Christ Jesus.” **CCC 2707**



Lectio Divina

“...Christian prayer tries above all to meditate on the mysteries of Christ, as in *Lectio Divina* or the Rosary. This form of prayerful reflection is of great value, but Christian prayer should go further: to the knowledge of the love of the Lord Jesus, to union with Him.

CCC 2708

“There is no doubt that this primacy of holiness and prayer is inconceivable without a renewed listening to the Word of God. ...It is especially necessary that listening to the Word of God should become a *life-giving encounter*, in the ancient and ever valid tradition of *Lectio Divina*, which draws from the Biblical text the living word which questions, directs and shapes our lives.”

NMI 39



Lectio Divina



“I would like in particular to recall and recommend the ancient tradition of ‘*Lectio Divina*.’ The diligent reading of Sacred Scripture accompanied by prayer brings about that *intimate dialogue* in which the person reading *hears God* who is speaking, and in praying, responds to Him with trusting openness of heart. If it is effectively promoted, this practice will bring to the Church - I am *convinced* of it - a *new spiritual springtime*.”

*Pope Benedict XVI,
September 2005*

Lectio Divina

“Among the many fruits of this Biblical springtime I would like to mention the spread of the ancient practice of *Lectio Divina* or "spiritual reading" of Sacred Scripture. It consists in pouring over a biblical text for some time, reading it and rereading it, as it were, "ruminating" on it as the Fathers say and squeezing from it, so to speak, all its "juice", so that it may nourish meditation and contemplation and, like water, succeed in irrigating life itself.”

Pope Benedict XVI, November 2005



The Most Holy Rosary



“I know of no better way of establishing the Kingdom of God, Eternal Wisdom, than to unite vocal and mental prayer by saying the Holy Rosary and meditating on its mysteries.”

St. Louis de Montfort

The Most Holy Rosary

“The Rosary, though clearly Marian in character, is at heart a Christocentric prayer. In the sobriety of its elements, it has all the *depth of the Gospel message in its entirety*, of which it can be said to be a *compendium*. [the Rosary could be said to be a *compendium* of the Gospel!] It is an echo of the prayer of Mary, her perennial *Magnificat* for the work of the redemptive Incarnation which began in her virginal womb. With the Rosary, the Christian people *sits at the school of Mary* and is led to contemplate the *beauty on the face of Christ* and to experience the *depths of His love*. Through the Rosary the faithful receive abundant grace, as though from the very hands of the Mother of the Redeemer.”

John Paul II, “The Rosary of the Virgin Mary,” 1



Dual Movement of “Deep” Conversion

- Not only away from sin, but also toward a more intimate relationship with God.
- Next session (two weeks) ***July 22***



Resources

Page includes text & 2 video tutorials on the practice of *Lectio Divina*.

- <http://www.enterthenarrowgate.org/index.cfm?load=page&page=349>

Page includes links to JPII's encyclical "The Rosary of the Virgin Mary, a History of the Rosary, how to pray the Rosary, with meditations on its four mysteries. The page also includes links to online text of "The Secret of Mary" and "The Secret of the Rosary" by St. Louis de Montfort.

- <http://www.enterthenarrowgate.org/index.cfm?load=page&page=272>