

# Link to Liturgy



## Finding Treasure 17th Sunday of Ordinary Time

### Lessons and Discussions

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*“The Kingdom is like finding treasure”*

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*“like a treasure buried in a field”*

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*“the kingdom of heaven is like a net thrown into the sea”*

*Link to Liturgy provides faithful resources which use the latest audiovisual means alongside traditional means to evangelize & catechize thus linking life to the Gospel & the Gospel to life. Sign up Free to Link to Liturgy.*



**Entrance Antiphon (Ps 67: 6-7, 36) – Simple English Propers**

*This should be chanted so that the time of prayer, study and discussion can be made sacred. Another song can be substituted, but should have the same theme.*

*Deus in loco sancto suo**Ps 68 (67): 6, 7, 36*

V  
**G** OD is in his ho-ly dwelling place; \* the God  
 who causes us to dwell to-gether, one at heart, in his  
 house; he himself will give power and strength to his  
 people.

**Source:** <http://www.ccwatershed.org/>

**Alternate options:**Hymns

All Creatures of Our God and King  
 All People That on Earth Do Dwell  
 Be Thou My Vision  
 Holy God, We Praise Thy Name  
 I Sing the Mighty Power of God  
 Now Thank We All Our God  
 Praise to the Holiest in the Height

Songs of Praise

All in All (Dennis Jernigan)  
 Lord you are More Precious than Silver (Lynn DeShazo)  
 More than Enough (Chris Tomlin)  
 We are Hungry (Hillsongs)

Remnant

Life is Not (Remnant)  
 Limitless (Remnant)  
 Psalm 63 (Remnant)  
 Totus Tuus (Remnant)

valley of tears. Turn, then, most gracious Advocate, thine eyes of mercy towards us; and after this our exile, show unto us the blessed fruit of they womb, Jesus. O clement, O loving, O sweet Virgin Mary.

V. Pray for us, O holy Mother of God

R. That we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ.

Let us pray. O almighty and everlasting God, who, by the co-operation of the Holy Ghost, didst prepare the body and soul of Mary, glorious Virgin and Mother, to become the worthy habitation of Thy Son: grant that we may be delivered from present evils, and from everlasting death, by her gracious intercession, in whose commemoration we rejoice. Through the same Christ our Lord, Thy Son, Who liveth and reigneth with Thee in the unity of the Holy Ghost, God, world without end. Amen.

**“The End” Notes**

- [1] footnotes Matthew 13:44 NAB
- [2] Merriam-Webster Dictionary
- [3] Saint Turibius de Mongrovejo
- [4] Saint Caesarius of Arles, bishop; Seventeenth Week in Ordinary Time; Monday; Office of Readings
- [5] Lines 17–20 from John Keat’s Ode on an Grecian Urn
- [6] Compendium of the Catechism of the Catholic Church; Appendix A; Common Prayers
- [7] Compendium of the Catechism of the Catholic Church: Section 370
- [8] Catechism of the Catholic Church; Section 1832
- [9] Spiritual Reading in this Link to Liturgy packet
- [10] Blessed John Paul II; Centesimus Annus; 39
- [11] Spiritual Reading in this Link to Liturgy Packet
- [12] Compendium of the Catechism of the Catholic Church; Appendix B; Formulas of Catholic Doctrine
- [13] The Apostles Creed
- [14] C. Journet, Theology of the Church, Bilbao
- [15] In the Conversation with God 4, 37.1
- [16] From a Homily by Saint Gregory the Great; July 22; Office of Readings; Liturgy of the Hours
- [17] Second Vatican Council, loc cit, 39
- [18] In the Conversation with God 4, 37.1

**Marian Antiphon – Salve Regina – Simple Tone**

**IV. ANTIPHON SALVE REGINA, SIMPLE TONE**  
From First Vespers of the Feast of the Blessed Trinity to None on Saturday  
before the First Sunday of Advent.

Ant.  
5.

**S** Alve, Re-gí-na, \* ma-ter mi-se-ri-córdi-æ : Vi-ta, dulcè-do, et spes nostra,

salve. Ad te clamámus, éxsu-les, fi-li-i Hevæ Ad te suspi-rámus,

gemén-tes et flentes in hac lacrimá-rum valle. E-ia ergo, Advocá-ta

nostra, il-los tu-os mi-se-ri-córdes ócu-los ad nos convér-te. Et Je-sum,

bene-díctum fructum ventris tu-i, nobis post hoc exsí-li-um osténde.

O clemens : O pi-a : O dulcis \* Virgo Ma-rí-a.

V. Ora pro nobis, sancta Dei Genitrix.

R. Ut digni efficiamur promissionibus Christi

Let us pray. O almighty and everlasting God, who, by the co-operation of the Holy Ghost, didst prepare the body and soul of Mary, glorious Virgin and Mother, to become the worthy habitation of Thy Son: grant that we may be delivered from present evils, and from everlasting death, by her gracious intercession, in whose commemoration we rejoice. Through the same Christ our Lord, Thy Son, Who liveth and reigneth with Thee in the unity of the Holy Ghost, God, world without end. Amen.

**English Translation**

Hail, holy Queen, Mother of mercy, our life, our sweetness, and our hope. To thee do we cry, poor banished children of Eve; to thee do we send up our sighs, mourning and weeping in this

**Collect – Roman Missal**

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen

O God, protector of those who hope in you, without whom nothing has firm foundation, nothing is holy, bestow in abundance your mercy upon us, and grant that, with you as our ruler and guide, we may use the good things that pass in such a way as to hold fast even now to those that ever endure.

Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen

**Gospel Reading – Matthew 13:44-52 – Roman Missal**

**NOTE:** *In the Roman Catholic Tridentine Lectionary this Gospel is not read.*

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew  
- Glory to you O Lord

Jesus said to his disciples: “The kingdom of heaven is like a treasure buried in a field, which a person finds and hides again, and out of joy goes and sells all that he has and buys that field. Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant searching for fine pearls. When he finds a pearl of great price, he goes and sells all that he has and buys it. Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a net thrown into the sea, which collects fish of every kind. When it is full they haul it ashore and sit down to put what is good into buckets. What is bad they throw away. Thus it will be at the end of the age. The angels will go out and separate the wicked from the righteous and throw them into the fiery furnace, where there will be wailing and grinding of teeth.

“Do you understand all these things?” They answered, “Yes.” And he replied, “Then every scribe who has been instructed in the kingdom of heaven is like the head of a household who brings from his storeroom both the new and the old.”

The Gospel of the Lord.

- Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ

**Spiritual Reading – Office of Readings – 17<sup>th</sup> Week of OT  
(Tuesday)**

From a sermon on charity by Saint Basil the Great, Bishop

You are going to leave your money behind you here whether you wish to or not. On the other hand, you will take with you to the Lord the honor that you have won through good works. In the presence of the universal judge, all the people will surround you, acclaim you as a public benefactor, and tell of your generosity and kindness.

Do you not see how people throw away their wealth on theatrical performances, boxing contests, mimes and fights between men and wild beasts, which are sickening to see, and all for the sake of fleeting honor and popular applause? If you are miserly with your money, how can you expect similar honor? Your reward for the right use of the things of this world will be everlasting glory, a crown of righteousness, and the kingdom of heaven; God will welcome you, the angels will praise you, all men who have existed since the world began will call you blessed. Do you care nothing for these things, and spurn the hopes that lie in the future for the sake of your present enjoyment. Come, distribute you wealth freely, give generously to those who are in need. Earn for yourself the psalmist's praise: He gave freely to the poor; his righteousness will endure for ever.

How grateful you should be to your own benefactor; how you should beam with joy at the honor of having other people come to your door, instead of being obliged to go to theirs! But you are now ill-humored and unapproachable; you avoid meeting people, in case you might be forced to loosen your purse-strings even a little. You can say only one thing: "I have nothing to give you. I am only a poor man." A poor man you certainly are, and destitute of all riches; you are poor in love, generosity, faith in God and hope of eternal happiness.

**Finding Treasure – Part I – Lesson and Discussion**

*"The Kingdom is like finding treasure"*

Chapter 13 of Saint Matthew's Gospel is full of parables and

Jesus, You said, "If you abide in me, and if my words abide in you, ask whatever you will and it shall be done to you." (John 15:7) Through the intercession of Your most holy Mother, Our Lady of the most Blessed Sacrament, may me request be granted, for I wish to abide in You through frequent Holy Communion.

Lord, I believe that I can do nothing better to obtain the favor I desire than to attend Holy Mass and to untie myself most intimately with You, the Source of all graces, in Holy Communion. When You are really and truly present in my soul as God and Man, my confidence is greatest, for you want to help me, because You are all-good; You know how to help me, because You are all-wise; You can help me, because You are all-powerful. Most Sacred Heart of Jesus , I believe in Your love for me!

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.  
Amen

The Church is not of this world, “a cultural phenomenon, a political institution, nor a scientific school, but a creation of the heavenly Father by means of Jesus Christ.”[18] This is why we should not leave the Church no matter what others within their Church do. We all have been shaken by scandals, but there has been scandal after scandal, sin after sin done by Catholics against Catholics and others. This does not mean we should leave the one true Church, but in fact renounce the sin, and cling to Mother Church even more! Those that have sinned, especially in the name of the Church or trying to associate with the Catholic Church will be thrown into the fire where there will be wailing and mashing of teeth, as Jesus described today.

### **Profession of Faith or Popular Devotion – Devotion to the Divine Infant of Jesus of Prague**

*The prayer below is part of the Novena to the Divine Infant Jesus of Prague, also called Santo Nino or the Holy Child. The infant Jesus should remind us of the Nativity. The Nativity of Our Lord is much like the parable of the hidden treasure. In a humble hidden stable in Bethlehem, the Treasure of the world is hidden. It is only those who seek, the wise men and the shepherds that find this Treasure in a most unexpected place. The infant Jesus teaches us trust and to have complete childlike dependence on God the Father. At the beginning of this prayer you may state your intention.*

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen

Jesus, You said, “Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and you shall find; knock, and it shall be opened to you.” (Matthew 7:7). Through the intercession of Your most holy Mother, Our Lady of the most Blessed Sacrament, I ask, I seek, I knock. Grant my prayer!

Jesus, You said. “If you ask the Father anything in my name, He will give it to you.” (John 16:23) Through the intercession of Your most holy Mother, Our Lady of the most Blessed Sacrament, I ask the Father in your name to grant my prayer.

Jesus, You said, “If you ask me anything in my name, I will do it.” (John 14:14) Through the intercession of Your most holy Mother, Our Lady of the most Blessed Sacrament, I ask You in Your name to grant my prayer.

today’s Gospel reading is the last of those parables. Jesus’ parables have layers of meaning that both people then and people now can seek to uncover. Jesus explains the meaning of many of the parables for the people who are listening. However, Jesus challenges the disciples to better understand these last parables dealing with a treasure, a pearl and a net.

**Why does Jesus ask if they understand the parables?** There is a key point in these parables that Jesus wants to get through. He shifts gears and instead of focusing on a collective, these parables look to the individuals. It is a single person going out and seeking the kingdom of Heaven in the pearl and coin. Jesus asks if they understand so they can be the new scribes to bring about the fulfillment of the new kingdom He was setting up. They were the ones who would help explain how Jesus fulfilled the old covenant with the new one.

**Why are they in search of a pearl or treasure?** During the time of Jesus, it was not unusual to guard valuables by burying them in the ground.[1] The Holy Land was also a main highway for armies and merchants. If war broke out it was not unusual for a person to bury their valuables. If that person died during the uprising, it could be possible that no one knew where the treasure was buried and an unrelated person could find it.

We go out and seek various treasures for many reasons, sometimes we find these treasures and sometimes we do not. When it comes to finding the truth, we will always find it but we must go out and look for it. The truth is so powerful that once it is found, we will do whatever it takes to obtain this truth. Jesus brings the fullness of the kingdom to us, but we can be blinded by our sin. When we finally see what He offers, we must be willing to take the treasures of the kingdom with open arms.

Jesus offers the truth and we seek the truth. Pontius Pilate asks the question that we all ask, “What is truth?” Pontius Pilate only asks the question, but does he really want the truth, does he seek the truth. In the Gospel of John, we hear Pontius Pilate’s response to meeting Jesus, “What is truth?” When he had said this, he again when out to the Jews and said to them, ‘I find no guilt in him. But you have a custom that I release one prisoner to you at Passover. Do you want me to release to you the King of the Jews?’ They cried out again, ‘Not this one but Barabbas!’ Now Barabbas was a revolutionary.” (John 18:38-40)

**Does Pontius Pilate really want the truth?** No, Pontius Pilate does not want truth. He asks the question, but he does not do what the man in the parable does. The man in the parable “finds” the truth, then he “goes out with joy” to get the truth and he “sells all” to obtain the truth. We do not see Pilate “finding the truth,” he only asks the question and does not seek further. We also do not see Pilate “going out with joy,” rather he goes out with doubt and confusion and asks the “crowd” what he should do. We also do not see Pilate “selling all” but rather “selling out.” The verb “to sell out” means to compromise one’s integrity, morality, or principles in exchange for money or success.[2] Pilate compromises his search for truth and exchanges truth for falsehood.

**How does he compromise the truth?** Pilate compromises the truth by succumbing to the temptation to seek truth somewhere other than Jesus. We are tempted in the same way Pilate is tempted. We ask the question, “What is truth?” but then we ask the wrong source for the answer. Pilate asked the crowd. When we ask the question “What is Truth?” many times we ask our self, our friends, and the world, but do we ask Christ, do we ask the Church. The challenge for us and for Pilate is to go immediately to the source of truth. Jesus, the source of truth and in fact Truth Himself, is standing right in front of him, yet Pilate does not go to the source. Jesus is standing right in front of us and in the Blessed Sacrament is present near us in the tabernacle and yet many times we do not go straight to the source.

**How do we know that Christ and His Church are the source of truth?** Jesus says, “I am the Way and the Truth and the Life.” (John 14:6) If we believe Jesus, then we must accept that He is the Truth. “Christ said, ‘I am the Truth;’ He did not say, ‘I am the custom.’”[3] Customs come and go, but the truth is forever. If we are accustomed to turning to the custom or what is popular rather than turning to the truth, we will be confused and lost in a world of lies. Pontius Pilate turns from the truth to the “custom” of the Jewish people. Christ promises the apostles to send them the Holy Spirit and says to them at the Last Supper, “But when he comes, the Spirit of truth, he will guide you to all truth.” (John 16:13) We know that Christ and the Church are the source of Truth because the Holy Trinity is Truth, the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. God is both unchanging and the fullness of Truth, since God became man through the Incarnation, we must hold that the fullness of Truth became

their object. Holy desires likewise grow with anticipation, and if they do not grow they are not really desires. Anyone who succeeds in attaining the truth has burned with such a love.”[16]

**How are unholy desires different from holy desires? Will we continue to seek Christ, even if our friends and world is not? If everyone leaves, will we stay at the tomb and continue to seek? Give examples of these questions.**

**Why are there so many hypocrites?** Before we go and blame others as hypocrites we should look in the mirror first because the truth is, we are all hypocrites. **What is a hypocrite?** The word hypocrite comes from Greek and means “stage actor.” It is a person who tries to be someone that they are not. We all have sinned and thus have failed to live up to what we say and preach. To sin is to be what we are not. We are not created to sin. Although when we sin, we are “being someone that we are not” hopefully our intention is not hypocritical. Hopefully we want to be true to Christ, true to our self, and live out our vocation to be holy. Even Solomon with all his wisdom and understanding in God still fell to idolatry. Since we are all in the same level, shouldn’t we look for something or someone who is not a hypocrite? The only thing in this world that has not fallen into hypocrisy is the Catholic Church. The only people who were never hypocrites were Mary, and her Son, Jesus Christ who formed and founded the Church. The Church, in its gentleness and care, looks not to damn us, but to bring healing and forgiveness through the Sacraments, which Christ founded. While the Church is full of sinners and hypocrites, the Church herself is pristine and perfect. The Body of Christ is made up of the Head, which is Christ and the members, which are the faithful. The Head is perfect, no hypocrisy, the members are imperfect, full of hypocrisy. The goal is for the members to follow the head, to “be perfect as your heavenly father is perfect.” (Mt. 5:48)

**How is the Church free from sin?** The Church was founded by Jesus Christ and is moved and directed by the Holy Spirit. Jesus “joined her to himself as his body and endowed her with the gift of the Holy Spirit for the glory of God...This holiness of the Church is constantly shown forth in the fruits of grace which the Spirit produces in the faithful and so it must be; it is expressed in many ways by the individuals who, each in his own state of life, tend to the perfection of love, thus sanctifying others.”[17]

a treasure not easily parted from. And it is not because she wants to carry around dead weight. She only hopes that through the power of patience, gentleness and pardon the sinner ill make his return to her.”[14] The Church continues to pray for her children who are not in the state of grace. The Church has infinite patience for each and every one of us. We too should have patience with others and pray for those who may need to return to “the fullness of spiritual life.”[15]

While we are on the first floor, there is still hope. We look at two Saints in particular, who were sinners but had a conversion of heart. The first is Saint Dismas, he is the good thief and in the infinite mercy of God was allowed to convert during the last breathes of his life. In the Byzantine Tradition the Cross has a slanted bar where the feet of Christ rest. One reason for the slanted bar, is to remind us of the mercy of God and the life of St. Dismas. The bar slants up on the right and down on the left. This is a reference to the good choice St. Dismas made, who was on the right of Christ and the bad choice the bad thief made, who was on the left of Christ. There is a joke that asks why St. Dismas is called the good thief. The answer is that he stole salvation at the last minute. The story of St. Dismas teaches us of the continual call of conversion and the reach of God’s mercy.

Saint Mary Magdalene who is called “equal to the Apostles” in the East, is another example of great conversion, a conversion that led to an unwavering love and desire for communion with Christ. Saint Odo of Cluny says of Mary Magdalene, “God’s loving mercy to repentant sinners is shown by the perfection attained by her who had merited not only the washing away her sins, but also to be made a consort of the apostles, when they received the news of the Resurrection of the Lord.” She is an example of the man who sold all and the merchant who went searching. “We should reflect on Mary’s attitude and the great love she felt for Christ; for though the disciples had left the tomb, she remained. She was still seeking the one she had not found, and while she sought she wept; burning with the fire of love, she longed for him who she thought had been taken away. And so it happened that the woman who stayed behind to seek Christ was the only one to see him. For perseverance is essential to any good deed, as the voice of truth tells us: Whoever preserves to the end will be saved. At first she sought but did not find, but when she persevered it happened that she found what she was looking for. When our desires are not satisfied, they grow stronger, and becoming stronger they take hold of

flesh in Jesus Christ. We must also accept that Truth has been sent to guide the Church through the Holy Spirit. Where else would we go? Like Saint Peter we can say, “Master, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life.” (John 6:68)

[\[See also Link to Liturgy Lesson - The Way, The Truth, The Life: Part I and Part II\]](#)

**VIDEO - Stop and Hear the Music - Pop Culture Connection – 2:37**

[http://youtu.be/hnOPu0\\_YWhw](http://youtu.be/hnOPu0_YWhw)

In a Metro Station in Washington D.C. on a cold January morning in 2007, a man with a violin played six Bach pieces for about 45 minutes. During that time, approximately 2,000 people went through the station, most of them on their way to work. After about 3 minutes, a middle-aged man noticed that there was a musician playing. He slowed his pace and stopped for a few seconds, and then he hurried on to meet his schedule. About 4 minutes later, the violinist received his first dollar. A woman threw money in the hat and continued to walk without stopping. At 6 minutes, a young man leaned against the wall to listen to him, then looked at his watch and started to walk again. At 10 minutes, a 3-year old boy stopped, but his mother tugged him along hurriedly. The kid stopped to look at the violinist again, but the mother pushed hard and the child continued to walk, turning his head the whole time. Several other children repeated this action, but every parent, without exception, forced their children to move on quickly. At 45 minutes, the musician played continuously. Only 6 people stopped and listened for a short while. About 20 gave money but continued to walk at their normal pace. The man collected a total of \$32. After 1 hour, he finished playing and silence took over. No one noticed and no one applauded. There was no recognition at all. No one knew this, but the violinist was Joshua Bell, one of the greatest musicians in the world. He played one of the most intricate pieces ever written, with a violin worth \$3.5 million dollars. Two days before, Joshua Bell sold-out a theater in Boston where the seats averaged \$100 each to sit and listen to him play the same music. This is a true story. Joshua Bell, playing incognito in the D.C. Metro Station, was organized by the Washington Post as part of a social experiment about perception, taste and people's priorities.

**Is Christ, like the musician, right before our face, but we don't see Him? Is the Word of God, like the sweet music**

**playing, but we can't hear it. Is that Word drowned out by the noise of the world? What keeps us from seeing Him, from hearing Him?**

This story also says a lot about our perception and the dignity of the human person. When Joshua Bell is in a tux, on a stage, and people are paying \$100 a seat to listen, they show him respect. When Joshua Bell looks homeless and is in the subway station and getting only a few coins, no respect is shown. Is it the same Joshua Bell? Yes. Many people during the time of Jesus and now, do not recognize Jesus or show Him respect, because He does not fit their perception. We must show dignity to all, regardless of our perception of them. There is only one lady in the video that stops. When she stops what happens? Others stop. If we stop to ask for Christ, seek Christ and knock on the door of Christ's heart we will cause others to ask, seek and knock. People will see us stop, and it might inspire them to stop. To "stop" is to pray, to pay attention to Christ, who is the hidden treasure. In this video Joshua Bell is the "hidden treasure" in the field of the subway.

**Finding Treasure – Part II – Lesson and Discussion**

*"like a treasure buried in a field"*

**Why doesn't the finder tell the owner of the field? Would that be stealing?** Jesus does not comment on this, His main focus is that of the man and his zeal to do whatever it took to get the treasure. The kingdom of Heaven is also hidden from our sight yet it is open for all to find. What does this mean? Does it matter that it is both hidden and open? Yes it is in a field that is open, which tells us that the kingdom of Heaven is out in the open and available for all of us. It is also buried, which tells us that we must seek to find it. Jesus is available, but wants to be sought.

**Why does Jesus make Himself available to all, yet hidden?**

Christ remains hidden so that we can ask, seek and knock. "Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you. For everyone who asks, receives; and the one who seeks, finds; and to the one who knocks, the door will be opened." (Matthew 7:7) Jesus wants us to pursue Him like a lover, He wants us to long for Him, to ask, seek and knock. We can remember our part by remembering the word A.S.K. We ask, seek and knock.

good and bad in every city. Many times in history, leaders have tried to create a utopia, a perfect place with no "bad", but it has never worked out and it will not work out until the end of time. Jesus speaks plainly of what God will do with the evil ones. He will give to them what they choose a place of nothingness, a place to burn and wail. This is done not because God hates them, but because of their actions has left no room in their heart for change or conversion. They have not sought out the treasures of the Kingdom of Heaven, thus they do not get to come to experience the eternal joy. They have not chosen God and so they will not be forced to be with God. It is by their actions and God's justice, they are banished into Hell.

**What is the significance of the net?** The net is the Church and like the net, the Church can have saints as well as sinners inside the Church. In fact, the Church is known to be a place with sinners. The Church has been referred to as an infirmary to help the sick. The Church does not leave us in our sickness, but scoops us up and tries to heal us. We say in the ninth article of the Creed that we believe in "the Holy Catholic Church, the Communion of Saints." [13] The Church, can also be seen as a building with three floors. The first floor is called the Church Militant, the Church on earth. Many times this floor seems like the emergency room, full of people in need of healing. The second floor is the Church Suffering, those in Purgatory; they know they are going to the third floor but need purification first. The third floor is the Church Triumphant; it is all the Saints united with God in the Kingdom of Heaven. It is only the first floor that has good and bad, the second is full of the good that are being cleansed and the third is the floor with the good that are pure and have reached perfection. It is good, when discussing the Church, to see the whole building not just one floor. If we only look at the first floor, we will get discouraged. It is for this reason that we look at the second floor, praying for the poor souls in purgatory and look at the third floor, asking Our Lady and the Saints and Angels for intercession.

**[See also Link to Liturgy Lesson - Two Fishing Stories]**

**Why does the church still have sinners welcome in the Church?** The Church is a Mother to all who are ill. "The Church continues to live in her children who are not in the state of grace. The Church seeks to work against the evil that corrupts their souls. She struggles to keep them in her fold, to bring them back to life with her love. She conserves them as one conserves

to sin, it will not be as difficult to deny our self the pleasure of sin that we are being tempted to say yes to.

**Are people who have a lot or spend a lot of money bad people?**

Of course not, God has blessed them with a great sum of wealth that they may have earned or may have not earned. God never promised us a fair trade when it comes to wealth, but He does provide us enough to live if we work hard enough. It is how we spend and use our money. Remember, money is NOT the root of all evil instead it is the love of money is the root of all evil. Many of the world's richest people are also some of the world's most giving people. They realize they cannot take their money with them when they die, and the true joy is not to have millions and billions of dollars but by helping others. We need an income to keep us financially stable and protected, but we cannot hoard wealth. We must be open to offering our wealth for the kingdom of God and His people when needed.

**[See also Link to Liturgy Packet Cycle A - OT08 - Material and Spiritual Goods]**

**Casting Out the Net – Lesson and Discussion**

*“The kingdom of heaven is like a net thrown into the sea”*

The last parable Jesus uses deals with casting out the net. This was right up the alley of many of the disciples who were fishermen by trade. Not done as much anymore, but some fishermen today still go out and catch small fish as bait for fishing. They typically have a large net with weights attached to the end and will throw it out into the water letting it hit the bottom and then pulling it back up to see what they caught. As someone can imagine, sometimes a fisherman can catch all sorts of things in their nets.

In the gospel reading, Jesus speaks more clearly in this parable about what will happen to the unjust people than He had at any point of His proclamation of the Kingdom. As Jesus said, it is true the just and unjust will be held together in the net, the Angels will come and separate us. He spoke of this parable right after speaking about the wheat and the weeds; of how good and evil will live and sometimes grow side by side, but in both parables Jesus reassures us that the evil will have their day of reckoning. We see the reality of good and evil side by side in every area of our culture. We would not say that any city is perfect, with only good, but rather you can witness both the

**[See also: Link to Liturgy Lesson - Pray without ceasing]**

**How is Jesus hidden in our life?** He might be hidden in our life, because we have not asked for Him, we have not looked for Him, and we have not sought after Him. He is hidden in His Word, as we see in the parables and in the types in the Old Testament that come to fulfillment in the New. He is hidden in His Sacraments and in the Liturgy. In the Most Blessed Sacrament, He hides Himself under the disguise of simple bread and wine. God chooses to hide from plain sight because He desires us to seek and find Him. Will we find Him or pass Him by?

**VIDEO - Lift the City - a Catholic Eucharistic flash mob - Pop Culture Connection – 8:08**

<http://youtu.be/cZ5aYoSr3Hg>

A Eucharistic flash mob in the centre of Preston organized by the Capuchin Franciscans on Ascension Thursday 2011. **How is our Eucharistic Lord, like the treasure hidden in the field? What are the responses of the people and what do they tell us about our own response to Christ?** Notice the children, their humility, and their joy.

He wants us to chase after Him, but He desires to be caught. He does not tease us but rather gives us what we are pursuing. He teaches us in the beatitudes that we will be rewarded. We can think of the first part of the beatitude as the chase for example “Blessed are the merciful.” Are we willing to chase after Christ, who is all-merciful? Are we willing to ask for mercy, seek mercy and knock for mercy and give mercy to others as Christ grants mercy to others? If we long for mercy, not just for self but also for others, we will receive God’s mercy. The second part of the beatitude contains the promise, the “catch.” Christ promises that “they shall receive mercy” to those who desire mercy and live mercy. We have to ask our self, do we think we can attain the promise with no effort on our part? Saint Caesarius of Arles asks the same question in a sermon to his flock, “What do you wish for, what do you pray for, my dear brothers and sisters, when you come to church? Is it mercy? How can it be anything else? Show mercy, then, while you are on earth, and mercy will be shown to you in heaven. A poor person asks you for something; you ask God for something. He begs for a morsel of food; you beg for eternal life. Give to the beggar so that you may merit to receive from Christ. For he it is who says, Give and it will be given to you. It baffles me that you have the imprudence

to ask for what you do not want to give. Give when you come to church. Give to the poor. Give them whatever your resources will allow.”[4]

There is a poem called Ode on a Grecian Urn. An urn is a pot. On this pot from ancient Greece, there is a lover chasing his beloved. Because the lover and beloved are etched into a pot, the lover will always chase, but never obtain oneness with his beloved. We know that Jesus is the groom and the Church is the bride. The bride (Church) is chasing after her groom (Christ). We, the Church, are like the lover on the Grecian urn, we desire, we chase, we long. In our hearts we pray, “O God, you are my God, for you I long; for you my song is thirsting. My body pines for you like a dry, weary land without water. So I gaze on you in the sanctuary to see your strength and your glory.” (Psalm 63) These words from King David express the desire of the human heart and match with the words of the poem. “Bold Lover, never, never canst thou kiss, Though winning near the goal – yet, do not grieve; She cannot fade, though thou hast not thy bliss, For ever wilt thou love, and she be fair!”[5]

**How is our life like the Grecian Urn?** We, the Church, will not be completely united to the one we love until we are in heaven and granted the Beatific Vision. Christ is hidden to us, but through the virtue of hope we long to kiss Christ, we long for the goal, we know that Christ does not fade and our love stays strong in this hope.

**How is our life unlike the Grecian Urn?** We know that we will be with our lover, with Christ our groom in heaven forever. We are not just frozen, forever longing for Christ, but rather we will obtain what we seek. We are people of Hope and through our baptism have been given the theological virtue of Hope. In the Act of Hope we pray, “O Lord God, I hope by your grace for the pardon of all my sins and after life here to gain eternal happiness because you have promised it who are infinitely powerful, faithful, kind, and merciful. In this hope I intend to live and die. Amen.”[6]

**What is our desire, what do we chase after?** We need to evaluate the desires of our hearts and discover honestly what we are choosing to live for at this moment in our lives. If achieving Heaven and unity with God is not what we are living for now, then we must change our core desire. We must be willing to do whatever it takes to gain this invaluable treasure. If we truly

with wisdom and grace so that we may be able to better serve others in the Kingdom on earth. This way we can reap our reward in Heaven.

**So we should all live with nothing?** Absolutely not, we all need to have the necessities to function in this world. We should all be living for something, but that something is not here on earth; our something is Heaven. If we are living for the next iPhone, the next car, the next house and that is all we consume our lives with, then we are missing the point. We may not be just living for the things themselves, but could be living for the sensation those things bring us. Saint John Paul II warns that we can begin to view our “lives as a series of sensations to be experienced rather than as a work to be accomplished.”[10]

We need things to stay connected; to transport us, and to keep us sheltered, but it does not define our lives and does not complete our lives, now or forever. In regards to the things of the world we have to ask if we are properly using them. Do we hoard them? Have they become a god to us, something we have to have? We will be rewarded for using the things of this world in the correct and proper way. “Your reward for the right use of the things of this world will be everlasting glory, a crown of righteousness, and the kingdom of heaven; God will welcome you, the angels will praise you, all men who have existed since the world began will call you blessed.”[11] Part of the Totus Tuus (Totally Yours) prayer says, “all that I possess is yours” Have we given what we possess to God, so that He can do with it what He wills?

One of the precepts of the Church is, “You shall observe the days of fasting and abstinence established by the Church.”[12] Fasting is a form of penance and we can of course choose to “give up” something at any time, but we must observe the fasting obligations the Church gives. **Why is it good to fast or give up something?** It is good practice to give up a “good” of this world for a greater good; that of heaven, that of God. By giving up something of this world, like electronics, food, drink, etc., we are not saying that those things are not good, but we are saying that there is a greater good. The first reason we fast is to keep our perspective straight. Temporal and earthly things are good, spiritual and heavenly things are better. The second reason we fast is to help us say “no”. If we are accustomed to fasting, giving up things, then it will not be as difficult to give up something when God demands that of us. When we are tempted

houses as our soul where we continue to store up sin and it just becomes our way of life, where we feel we cannot let go of these sinful habits in order to clean soul through the purging of Reconciliation. When people do any type of spring cleaning or giving away of things to Goodwill, very rarely do we miss or regret giving away those things. We feel accomplished and almost freed from their burdens. When we let go of sin and live for the kingdom of Heaven, we can live more freely.

#### **TV Show - MTV cribs - Pop Culture Connection - 3:01**

<http://youtu.be/T2geWV-TIII>

When we earn and gain a lot of money, we feel we should spend it all on ourselves. The video shows a rapper who spent an enormous amount of money on some amazing things. While they are all beautiful and probably making him happy, think about in twenty, thirty, or forty years from now. Where do you think his million-dollar car will be? Will he still be just as happy about that purchase as he did that day? It is a safe bet that he will not. While having nice things does not make anyone a bad person, we should realize they cannot bring us eternal joy on this earth like the kingdom of Heaven will.

#### **TV Show - Life - I'm Not Attached To This Car - Pop Culture Connection - 0:29**

<http://youtu.be/pxxZftIwDs4>

The scene opens with the main character, Charlie Crews, listening to a Zen teaching on what it means to be detached from the moment or the object. He is listening to it while driving his new sports car through the city's streets and finding it rather difficult to not be attached to the vehicle. The scene should work well in the lesson "Living Minimally", under the section on "Why is it good to live with less?" The distraction of the car's speed and thrill distracts Charlie from the teachings he tries to live by, much like how the treasures of Earth can distract us and how religious orders takes vows of poverty to focus themselves properly.

In the first reading, Solomon asked not for power or money but for understanding to know, love, and serve God and help the kingdom. God blesses Solomon with a heart "so wise...that there has never been anyone like you up to now" (1 Kings 3:12) When someone prays for a million dollars, what is their motive? Do they want these riches to help God's kingdom here on earth or for selfish reasons? We need to be more like Solomon in asking God in prayer for a better understanding of God and bless us

desire God, then we will do whatever it takes. We will "sell all" to gain this treasure.

#### **TV AD - Volkswagen Jetta "Moonlighting" - Pop Culture Connection - 1:00**

<http://youtu.be/uvvJD0sAJts>

The man is working really hard through odds and end jobs to purchase a car. He was willing to do whatever it took to buy this car. When, one day he discovers he can afford not just one but two of the cars! **Think of a time when there was something you really wanted. What was it? What did you do to get it? If you got it, how did you feel?** The men who find the coins and pearl are filled with joy. When we find the truth and peace of God, we are filled with Joy. The kingdom of Heaven is completely filled with joy for all eternity.

#### **Why does joy motivate us? How can we be filled with joy?**

Joy is a passion that motivates us to act. "The passions are the feelings, the emotions or the movements of the sensible appetite – natural components of human psychology – which incline a person to act or not act in view of what is perceived as good or evil. The principal passions are love and hatred, desire and fear, joy, sadness and anger. The chief passion is love which is drawn by the attraction of the good. One can only love what is good, real or apparent." [7] In order to love Jesus Christ, He must be real and apparent to us and not remain hidden. When He becomes real and apparent to us, we see Him as Truth, Beauty and Goodness and we are drawn to Him. We must ask for the Grace to have love not hatred, desire not fear and joy not sadness or anger. First we must ask, seek and knock; second we must embrace Him with love, desire and joy. Joy is one of the fruits of the Holy Spirit and by living out the Sacraments of Baptism and Confirmation this fruit can be perfected in us. "The fruits of the Spirit are perfections that the Holy Spirit forms in us as the first fruits of eternal glory. The tradition of the Church lists twelve of them: 'charity, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, generosity, gentleness, faithfulness, modesty, self-control, chastity.'" [8]

The treasure of Heaven is out there ready to be dug up by each and every one of us. We must be willing to start digging to find it within our lives. We cannot find it by just sitting around doing nothing. We also will not find it right away for this process takes time. It only gets better the deeper we dig into our own life. To give of ourselves for love's sake is to sacrifice, and as Saint Jose

Maria Escriva once said, "Love is sacrifice: and sacrifice for Love's sake is joy." We will find joy when we seek out the love of God. The kingdom of Heaven is of far too much importance to ignore or neglect. We cannot attain an end that we are not seeking.

### **Living Minimally – Lesson and Discussion**

*"sells all that he has"*

**Why do the people in the parables sell all they own?** They go and sell off everything because they realize that nothing in their life is worth much, compared to what they had found. When we realize the true worth of the kingdom of Heaven, we will not want to live for this world. Let's face it, we live in a materialistic and consumerist world. Our whole country and economy are based on the idea that we will spend money. We are taught to think we should live for a big house, stuff to put in that house, at least one car per person, and other things to fill our lives on a constant basis. We need to begin to live our lives not just within our means, but to the bare bone in order to focus on what is truly important. We must live life knowing the treasures on this earth will never fulfill our deepest desires, our deepest longings for truth, or bring us eternal joy that only the kingdom of Heaven can bring to us.

**Why is it good to live with less?** We come into this world with nothing but our body and eternal soul and that is how we go out of this world. A priest once said, "You will never see a U-Haul truck driving behind a hearse," meaning we will not be carrying our possessions with us to the grave when we die. Everything that we acquire is left to our friends and loved ones. The desire to fill our hearts with the possessions of the world is not a modern desire, but a human desire. In the time of Saint Basil the Great (300AD) people wasted their money just as we do now. "Do you not see how people throw away their wealth on theatrical performances, boxing contests, mimes and fights between men and wild beasts, which are sickening to see, and all for the sake of fleeting honor and popular applause?"[9] Saint Augustine, who also lived in the 300's, challenged the people of his time, and us as well, when he asks, "What do you possess, if you possess not God?" When we live with less, we do not run the risk of the things to control our lives. Where our heart is, there our faith is. Jesus teaches us, "Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and decay destroys, and thieves break in and steal. But store up treasures in heaven, where

neither moth nor decay destroy, nor thieves break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there also will your heart be." (Mt. 6:19-21) If our heart cannot see the riches of the kingdom but only focus and love of the riches of the earth, then it is not with God.

Many religious orders take the vow of poverty because if their focus is on possessions, then they cannot focus on what is more important which is God. From what we know, Jesus himself lived a very minimalist life. He had just enough things to keep Him going but was able to be constantly moving. Jesus lived what is called the Evangelical Councils. They are poverty, chastity and obedience. Religious orders take vows to imitate Christ in these ways, but all Christians are called to this life of poverty, chastity and obedience according to their state in life. In following these councils we are living the life of Christ. We can look to the Cross and imitate our Lord. Christ's hands are nailed and open. He cannot hold onto any worldly possessions, but has emptied His hands of all. Christ's heart is pierced. He lives the life of chastity in which He gives the gift of Himself to all and in purity. Christ's feet are nailed. He is obedient to His Father's will, not wandering all over the place or following a will contrary to the Father, but instead being obedient where He is placed.

**How do we all practice the evangelical councils, especially that of poverty?** When we say yes to something, we say no to something else. We make a choice. We make a choice everyday with our hands, what will they hold; with our feet, what path will we follow and with our heart, what will we desire. When we purchase something or spend our time with something or someone, we cannot get that back. We should remain diligent in keeping our life open to accepting the will of God when He asks of it and not be bogged down by other things.

### **Music - "Gone" by Switchfoot - Pop Culture Connection - 3:46**

<http://youtu.be/YISE0wk9XbY>

A great song about how everything eventually goes away. A great line is "Where's your treasure...Where's your hope?" This is a question we should constantly ask ourselves. What do we put our hope in? What do we consider priceless? What is beyond replacement?

### **TV Show - Hoarders - Pop Culture Connection - 1:02**

[http://youtu.be/NY16aLaF\\_ZE](http://youtu.be/NY16aLaF_ZE)

This is the exact opposite of living minimally. Imagine these