

Link to Liturgy



25th Sunday in Ordinary Time Money or God

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Lessons and Discussions

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“And if you have not been trustworthy with someone else’s money, who will give you what is your own?”

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“You cannot give yourself to God and money.”

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“The children of this world are wiser in their generation than the children of light”

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“Make friends for yourselves through your use of this world’s goods”

Entrance Antiphon – Roman Missal

Should be chanted so that the time of prayer, study and discussion can be made sacred.

Salus populi

Cf. Ps 37 (36): 38, 40, 28

IV

I am the salvation of the people, says the Lord; *

from whate-ver tribu-lations they cry out to me, I will

give heed to them; and I will be their Lord for e-ver.

Alternate options:

- Christ Is Made the Sure Foundation
- Crown Him with Many Crowns
- Holy God, We Praise Thy Name
- O Lord, I Am Not Worthy
- Praise, My Soul, the King of Heaven
- What Wondrous Love Is This?
- Refuge
- Lift High the Cross

Collect – Daily Roman Missal

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

Father, guide us, as you guide creation according to your law of love. May we love one another and come to perfection in the eternal life prepared for us. Grant this through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you and 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

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] Mark 10:18

[2] My Catholic Faith

[3] CCC 952

[4] John Paul II, Apostolic Exhortation, *Christifideles laici*; December, 30 1988

[5] The Church’s Year

[6] Lawful or legal

[7] See CCC 2423-2424

[8] In Conversation with God

[9] Divine Intimacy

[10] The Church’s Year

[11] Association of the Miraculous Medal; amm.org

[12] In Conversation with God

[13] In Conversation with God

[14] Payment or compensation received for services or employment.

[15] In Conversation with God

[16] Most of this section taking from The Church’s Year

[17] Fr. Hardon; Catholic Dictionary

[18] The Church’s Year

[19] Catholic.org

[20] Divine Intimacy

[21] The Church’s Year

[22] Fr. Hardon; Catholic Dictionary

[23] Matthew 5:3

[24] Matthew 26:11

Gospel Reading – Luke 16:1-13 –Roman Missal

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

Jesus said to his disciples: “A rich man had a manager who was reported to him for dissipating his property. He summoned him and said, ‘What is this I hear about you? Give me an account of your service, for it is about to come to an end.’ The manager thought to himself, ‘What shall I do next? My employer is sure to dismiss me. I cannot dig ditches. I am ashamed to go begging. I have it! Here is a way to make sure that people will take me into their homes when I am let go.’ “So he called in each of his master’s debtors, and said to the first, ‘How much do you owe my master?’ The man replied, ‘A hundred jars of oil.’ The manager said, ‘Take your invoice, sit down quickly, and make it fifty.’ Then he said to a second, ‘How much do you owe?’ The answer came, ‘A hundred measures of wheat,’ and the manager said, ‘Take your invoice and make it eighty.’ “The owner then gave his devious employee credit for being enterprising! Why? Because the worldly take more initiative than the other-worldly when it comes to dealing with their own kind. “What I say to you is this: Make friends for yourselves through your use of this world’s goods, so that when they fail you, a lasting reception will be yours.

If you can trust a man in little things, you can also trust him in greater; while anyone unjust in slight matter is also unjust in greater. If you cannot be trusted with elusive wealth, who will trust you with lasting? And if you have not been trustworthy with someone else’s money, who will give you what is your own?

No servant can serve two masters. Either he will hate the one and love the other or be attentive to the one and despise the other. You cannot give yourself to God and money.”

The Gospel of the Lord.

- Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ

Spiritual Reading – Divine Office

From Saint Augustine, Bishop and Doctor of the Church

You are the stability which makes me firm against all temptations; if they increase and frighten me, You are my refuge. You are my hope, my inheritance in the land of the living. Oh! How much I owe You, my Lord God, who redeemed me at so great a price! Oh! How much I ought to love, bless, praise, honor, and glorify You who have loved me so much! I shall give praise to Your Name, O God, who made me capable of receiving the great glory of being Your son. I owe to You all I have, all that is of use for my life, all that I know and love. Who possesses anything that is not Yours? Bestow Your gifts on me, O Lord our God, so that made rich by You, I may serve and please You, and every day return thanks to You for all that Your mercy has done for me. I cannot serve You or please You without making use of Your own gifts to me.

Responsory – Divine Office

Christ, Son of the living God, Have mercy on us.
 - Christ, Son of the living God, Have mercy on us.

Who sits at the Father’s right hand
 - Have mercy on us.

Glory be to the Father, to the Son and to the Holy Spirit
 - Christ, Son of the living God, Have mercy on us.
 Arise, O Christ, and help us.
 - And deliver us for Thy name’s sake

Gifts and Goods - Lesson and Discussion

“And if you have not been trustworthy with someone else’s money, who will give you what is your own?”

In the Creed we say that we believe in the “Communion of Saints”. This refers to the Church militant (on earth), the Church suffering (in purgatory) and the Church triumphant (in heaven). When we look at the Church on earth, especially the early Church community, we see that they had “everything in common”, they shared the “common good”. As Jesus said to the Rich Young ruler, “no one is good buy God alone”[1] It is from the “One Good” that all “good” and “goods” come from. Those in Heaven intercede and give relief to those in purgatory and intercede and give grace to those on earth. Those in Purgatory pray for and give gratitude to those on Earth and pray to and give praise to those in Heaven. Those on Earth may suffer, pray for and gain indulgences for those in Purgatory and pray to and

Marian Antiphon – Divine Office

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

Ant. 5.

Alve, Re-gí-na, * ma-ter mi-se-ri-córdi-æ: Vi-ta, dulcé-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 exs- li- um osténde.
 O clemens: O pi- a: O dulcis * Virgo Ma-ri- 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 valley of tears. Turn, then, most gracious Advocate, thine eyes

Remember besides that it does not injure you in the sight of God, if all possible evil is said of you, and that He, at all times, cares for those who trust in Him; for he who touches the honor of those who fear God, touches, as it were, the pupil of His eye (Zach. 2:8), and shall not go unpunished. St. Chrysostom says: "If you are guilty, be converted; if you are innocent, think of Christ."

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

Guard me, O most loving Jesus, that I may not be so blinded, either by hatred or envy, as to rob my neighbor of his good name, or make myself guilty of such a grievous sin.

O most innocent Jesus, who wert thus calumniated, I submit myself wholly to Thy divine will, and am ready like Thee, to bear all slanders and detractions, as with perfect confidence I yield to Thy care my good name, convinced that Thou at Thy pleasure wilt defend and protect it, and save me from the hands of my enemies.

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

give praise to those in Heaven.[2] All of these action are a share in the "goodness" of God, the "Good" common to all three.

"They had everything in common." (Acts 4:32) "Everything the true Christian has is to be regarded as a good possessed in common with everyone else. All Christians should be ready and eager to come to the help of the needy... and of the neighbors in want." (Roman Catechism I, 10, 27) A Christian is a steward of the Lord's goods. (Luke 16: 1, 3)[3]

What gifts has God (the rich man) given us (the steward)?

God has given us various goods of soul and body, of grace and nature: faith, intellect, memory, free will; the five senses, health, strength of body, beauty, skill, power over others, time and opportunity for good, temporal riches, and other gifts.

ACTIVITY - Gift Evaluation

There are 12 gifts above. Drop two gifts that you would rank last and then make a top 10 list ranking the gifts, 1 being the most important to you. After you have ranked the gifts, out to the side put either a (S) for soul or (B) for body indicating whether you think the gift is more part of the soul or the body.

Why would the father of lies, Satan try to convince us that we are no good, that we do not have any gifts?

It is only those with gifts that can do something. Satan wants to keep us idle, not doing anything. There is a phrase that says "idle hands are the devil's workshop". If we really believe that we have no gifts then we will never believe that we can give God honor and help in the salvation of souls. We can never fulfill the vocation (the calling) that God has given us. We also we not be thankful to God and give Him the praise that He is do. We can make two grave mistakes. One mistake is believing the lie that we have no gifts, the we have nothing to give. Two is believing that God would be just wasting gifts if He did give them to us, it is not God who wastes gifts. He bestows gifts generously upon us, it is us who waste them either by not believing that we have them or choosing to not use or misuse them.

Why does God give man so many gifts?

It is simple, God loves us. What lover does not give gives to the one he loves? "Humanity is loved by God! This very simple yet profound proclamation is owed to humanity by the Church. Each Christian's words and life must make this proclamation resound.[4] These various goods of soul and body God gives us

not as our own, but as things to be used for His honor and the salvation of man. We show the world that God loves all of humanity by taking the gifts God gives and using them for salvation and the honor of the one who gave the gifts to us.

Give examples of how the gifts people have been given in life have been used for sin, luxury, seduction or oppression.

God will demand the strictest account of us if we use the gifts He has given for “His honor” and the “salvation of man” and we instead use them for sin, luxury, seduction, or oppression of others. There are two ways to use the gifts we have been given.

1. for the glory and honor of God and for the salvation of self and others. OR 2. for self, first and then to others, with the intent of getting something out of it.

Some don't believe that God exists, where would these people say that “gifts” come from? Also what is the purpose of these gifts if not for “God's honor” and “man's salvation”?

Can we ever repay God? No, there is absolutely no way we could ever repay God. If we can never repay, this then means that we owe God, as Saint Augustine says. Is it bad to owe God? 1 Peter 4:8 says, “Charity covers a multitude of sins”. It was the ultimate act of charity, Christ dying on the Cross that covered all sins. Jesus showed us charity and so we imitate His charity and give back to Him and to our neighbor charity. We can only act in charity because it was Jesus who first showed us charity. Any charity we show toward God and neighbor is a share in the charity of Christ, and thus it covers a multitude of sins and gives back to Christ what He gave to us.

“These little acts of charity, which are always within our power, are the riches by which we pay our debts and put in order ‘our stewardship’.”[5] We may not be rewarded in this life for the acts of charity, and these acts may make us suffer and get weary and so we put great trust in our Master. Saint Dominic Savio says, “Nothing seems tiresome or painful when you are working for a Master who pays well; who rewards even a cup of cold water given for love of Him.”

always have with you.”[24] This is a reminder to us that acts of charity toward the poor are always available to us. We must treat these poor as friends and as the woman treated Jesus. We must give to the poor “a generous offering as a friend”.

What do the people in our lives; especially our friends do for you now?

What do they do for you later (heaven)?

In other words are they making you better and helping you to grow in holiness or are they just helping you out in this life?

The Story of Saint Lawrence

Saint Lawrence was one of the arch-deacons of Rome. This meant that he was one of the Pope's secretaries and personal assistants. During the time of Saint Lawrence the Roman Empire was persecuting Catholics and made it against the law to believe in Christ and His Church. The emperor had a suspicion that the Church was hiding away riches somewhere. He was going to kill Saint Lawrence but before murdering him, the emperor commanded that Saint Lawrence bring to him all the treasures of the Church. A few days later, many of the poor from the streets of Rome appeared outside the Emperor's palace. Disgusted by the sick and poor that were outside the palace, the emperor was furious and wanted to know who was responsible for this. Saint Lawrence told the emperor that he was only doing what he was asked. The poor and the sick Saint Lawrence explained are the Churches treasure.

Profession of Faith or Popular Devotion - Consolation for those who have suffered from detraction

If your good name has been taken away by evil tongues, you may be consoled by knowing that God permitted this to humble you, to exercise you in patience and free you from pride and vain self-complacency. Turn your eyes to the saints of the Old and the New Law, to the chaste Joseph who was cast into prison on a false charge of adultery (Genesis 39), to the meek David publicly accused by Semei as a man of blood (2 Kings 16:7), to the chaste Susanna who was also accused of adultery, tried and condemned to death (Daniel 13). Jesus, the king of saints was called a drunkard, accused and condemned as a blasphemer, a friend of the devil; an inciter of sedition among the people, and like the greatest criminal was nailed to the cross between two thieves.

MOVIE – “The Sandlot” – POP CULTURE CONNECTION – 5:58

<http://youtu.be/rF2EKw9bcWw?t=3m54s>

In the clip we see the main character befriending an outcast. He even gives him an extra glove and later in the movie gives him an old hat. We should also seek those that don't have anyone to befriend.

Saint Augustine says, “God admonishes all of us to use our earthly goods to make friends for ourselves among the poor. They, in turn, becoming the friends of their benefactors, will be the cause of their admission into heaven.”[20]

Why is it good to befriend the poor?

According to St. Ambrose the friends that we make by alms-giving are the poor, the saints and angels, even Christ Himself: for that which we give to the poor, we give to Christ (Mt. 25:40). “The hands of the poor,” says Peter Chrysologus, “are the hands of Christ,” through whom we send our riches to heaven before us, and through whose intercessions we obtain the grace of salvation.”[21]

What does “alms” mean? “Material of financial assistance given to a needy person or cause, prompted by Christian charity. Almsgiving is recognized by the Church as one of the principal forms of penance.”[22]

What kind of friends do I want to make? What do the friends I make give me? Do they give me temporal things? Do they give me spiritual things? It is not just important to make friends with “the poor” but also “the poor and spirit”. The poor in spirit are those that know they “need” God, those that put their trust in God and are committed to the worship and service of God.

Do we do whatever it takes to make sure, we make friends that help us get to heaven, both the “poor” and the “poor in spirit”? Remember the words of Jesus, “Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.”[23] We have to also remember that Jesus was poor! When the woman washed Jesus feet, dried His feet with her hair and then put expensive perfume on the feet of Jesus the apostles protested. Jesus replied, “What she has done as a generous offering as a friend it shall be remembered”. The apostles showed concern for the poor and had wanted to sell the perfume and take the money from the sale and give to the poor. Jesus told them, “The poor you will

Give an example of how one “little act” of charity covers a multitude of sin?

We cannot neglect works of charity. Saint Benedict says in his rule to never miss a chance to show charity. We have opportunities each day to show charity to people. We miss those opportunities because we are not alert and ready for them. We become very content and comfortable with our lives. Jesus is asking us to be alert and diligent and just as aware and eager to show charity to those in our daily lives as the steward was alert, diligent, aware and eager to show “dishonest” charity to the debtors.

What is one act of charity that you can do this week?**Money or God - Lesson and Discussion**

“You cannot give yourself to God and money.”

Is Money bad? No! Money is not intrinsically evil. Money is a means to an end. It is just a means. Many times money is considered bad because of the temptations to gather it and keep it through unjust means and because money is often squandered or badly used. Money can be a means to virtue or a means to vice. It is a means to vice when we keep it unjustly, we squander and waste it or we use it badly. Money can lead to idolatry, we see money as an end rather than a means. Money should never be the end, the most important thing, the bottom line.

Jesus in this Gospel says, “No servant can serve two masters. Either he will hate the one and love the other or be attentive to the one and despise the other. You cannot give yourself to God and money” We have only one Lord. We must serve him with all our heart, with the natural gifts He himself has given us, using every licit[6] mean throughout our entire life. We must direct everything toward him: our work, our plans, our leisure, without holding anything back. We cannot allow money to become our god, or let the objective of our life become the accumulation of the greatest number of goods and the highest level of comfort. God calls us to the most transcendent destiny.

The Story of Saint Francis

St. Francis came from a wealthy family. When he was a young man he was the life of the party and would spend lots of money throwing parties for his friends, on entertainment and on

clothes. He was very popular and decided to fight for his city by going to battle. While at battle, he became sick and was hospitalized. It was during this time that he heard the voice of God say, "Francis, if you had the choice, would you rather serve the servant or the master?" Francis replied that he would rather serve the master, then God answered by saying, "Then why are you following the world"

See also Link to Liturgy Packet – St. Francis of Assisi

Give examples of how the objective of life can become the accumulation of the greatest number of goods or the highest level of comfort. To what extremes will people go to accumulate things? What are some examples of our desire for the highest level of comfort. Does this desire reflect our true needs or our wants? One example a priest gave is modern architecture. Sometimes a building is built for looks only and no one considers how much it will cost to air condition the building. When you add the two comforts, air conditioned building and good looks or cool architecture, it is likely that the building is both expensive and wasteful, but we want the highest level of comfort so cost and waste does not matter.

What does transcendent destiny mean? We are created for heaven for something greater than the goods or comfort of this world. Many feel that money is the solution to their problems. Tom Monaghan is a perfect witness that money does not satisfy, but that money can be used to help build the transcendent and lead people to heaven.

VIDEO – Dominoes founder, Tom Monaghan – POP CULTURE CONNECTION – 1:22

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hq-KKheLafo>
Tom Monaghan, founder of Domino's Pizza and owner of the Detroit Tigers made a bold decision to sale Dominoes (1 billion) and invest his money (\$200 million) in Catholic Education. Tom saw that money was not the end but a mean. Tom said that before his life was just the accumulation of goods or the pursuit of goals, and that his decision to use his money for the glory of God "freed him from enslavement".

LINK - Story of Dominoes founder, Tom Monaghan

http://www.catholiceducation.org/articles/catholic_stories/cs0039.html

we did do what someone accused us of and we are harmed that they have told others, we can admit again our wrong, be humbled and continue on being a changed person and an example to others of conversion.

Story of Saint Dominic Savio

You can put up on a power point or a board the following: a drunkard, a blasphemer, a friend of the devil, an inciter of sedition among the people, condemned and died a criminal. Ask who they think this person could be. It is Jesus and these were the detractions that were said about Him during the time He lived. If you did not know Jesus and lived during His time, people might describe His as a drunkard, friend of sinners, etc. We must imitate Jesus when detractions come our way. Saint Dominic Savio is the patron Saint of the falsely accused. This title was given to him due to the following incident. One time, two boys filled the school stove with snow and garbage during the cold winter months. When the teacher came back into the room, they falsely accused Dominic of doing the "dirty" deed. Although disciplined in front of the entire class, Dominic refused to tell on the two mischievous boys. When the truth was later revealed, Dominic was asked why he didn't confess to his innocence. He remarked that he was imitating Our Lord, Who remained silent during His persecutions and crucifixion.[19]

Friends - Lesson and Discussion

"Make friends for yourselves through your use of this world's goods, so that when they fail you, a lasting reception will be yours"

What if the steward was an employee at McDonalds and was going to be fired because he stole money from the cash register. His boss told him that he had one more week of work before he was going to be let go. The employee made sure to tell all those he knew to come in that week and he would give those who came in free drinks, desserts, etc. How will those that received free drinks and desserts from the employee feel towards him after he is fired? They would remember his kindness and even though it was wrong, they would try to repay the favor. In the same way, the servant in the Gospel is looking ahead, toward his future. He knows that he will be fired so he wants to make as many friends as possible so that when he no longer has a job he at least will have friends to take care of him or maybe even offer him a job.

Are there other ways we can participate in detraction other than just listening? We no longer have to be listening, we can be reading. With social networking sites like Facebook, pictures and posts can be published in which detract a person's reputation. If we read and look at these, they affect how we think about the person whom was harmed.

What should we do if we have committed the sin of detraction? We can do the following:

1. retract the calumny (false accusation) as soon as possible and repair the injury done to our neighbor in regards to his name.
2. we should detest our sin, regret it, and go to confession.
3. we should pray daily for the person that we have injured, this will heal the person and us
4. in the future we should guard against the sin of detraction, especially the list above.

Is detraction a great sin? Why? How does detraction hurt others, hurt God? How can a person with a hurt, destroyed reputation go deeper into sin? Yes, for it is directly opposed to love of our neighbor, therefore to the love of God, hence it is, as St. Ambrose says, hateful to God and man. By it we rob our neighbor of a possession greater than riches (Prov. 22:1), and often he is plunged by it into want and misery, even into the greatest vices; St. Ambrose says: "Let us fly from the vice of detraction, for it is altogether a satanic abyss, full of deceit." Finally, detraction is a great sin, because it can seldom be recalled, and the injury done by it is very great, and often irreparable.

What should we do, how should we act, when another person commits the sin of detraction toward us? Our first reaction is sometimes to talk bad about another and harm the reputation of the person that harmed yours. There is also the tendency to get as many people on our side to get others anger at the person that hurt our reputation and to take vengeance on that person. We think that we can pay back the person for the good they have taken from us. This is not the way that Christ reacted when He was lied about and accused falsely. He remained silent and knew that the truth would prevail in the end. He was confident in who He was. We can learn from this calmness and peace and be secure in the truth. If we did not do what someone has accused us of then we know that we are clear of the charge. If

A theory that makes profit the exclusive norm and ultimate end of economic activity is morally unacceptable. The disordered desire for money cannot but produce perverse effects...A system that "subordinates the basic rights of individuals and of groups to the collective organization of production" is contrary to human dignity. (GS 65.2) Every practice that reduces persons to nothing more than a means of profit enslaves man, leads to idolizing money, and contributes to the spread of atheism. "You cannot serve God and mammon." (Luke 16:13)[7]

In regards to business what does the Church teach us?

Profit cannot be the only goal or ultimate end of a business. In fact, if you look at the greatest entrepreneurs of all time, they did not care about money to be insanely rich. They look to money as a tool to use to build their ideas and vision. They have great passion and drive for something. We should not have a disordered desire for money. People must be more important than production, they cannot be treated as objects or a means to an end. We should have a desire and drive for God first. God will give us the ability to pursue our dreams if we allow Him to dwell within us first.

What will happen if we do not heed the Church's advice?

Man will be enslaved, we will idolize money, and atheism will spread. **Where do you see these three things in modern society?** The spread of atheism (the belief in no God) is an effect of idolizing money. Money becomes our god. There is no need for God because the money god supposedly is the solution for every need, every problem. There is not transcendent destiny (heaven) but only here and now (earth). "We need to work with renewed enthusiasm and energy to remake what has been what has been destroyed by the culture of hedonism and materialism." [8]

100% - Lesson and Discussion

"The children of this world are wiser in their generation than the children of light"

"When Jesus spoke this parable, He certainly had no intention of praising the conduct of the 'unjust' steward who, after wasting his master's goods during his whole stewardship, continued to steal even when he learned that he was to be discharged. However, Jesus did praise him for the clever way he made sure of his own future. The lesson of the parable hinges on this point: 'The children of this world are wiser in their generation

than the children of light. And I say to you: Make unto your friends of the mammon of iniquity; that when you shall fail, they may receive you into everlasting dwellings.’ Jesus exhorts the ‘children of light’ not to be less shrewd in providing for their eternal interests than the ‘children of darkness’ are in assuring for themselves the goods of the earth.”[9]

Why did Jesus praise the shrewd servant? He praised him for his prudence and foresight, but not for his injustice; for he adds: The children of this world are wiser than the children of light: that is, the worldly-minded understand better how to obtain temporal goods than do Christians to lay up treasures for themselves in heaven.[10]

Why is it easier to obtain temporal goods (earthly goods) than it is to obtain spiritual goods (eternal goods)?

Think about obtaining earthly goods; what makes it easy to want them? Advertising, word of mouth, desires that we think we “need” it. **Give examples of spiritual advertising. What increases in us the desire and need God?**

What makes us able to get earthly goods? Usually this is easy; we just have to have money: cash, credit or check. We need skills and talents for example the shrewd servant was clever.

What makes us able to get spiritual goods? Grace is a participation in the life of God. Grace is free; all we have to do is accept and cooperate with it. **Are we asking for Grace?** See story of the miraculous medal below. Acts of charity also obtain spiritual goods as money obtains temporal goods.

Story of Our Lady of Grace on the Miraculous Medal (Second Apparition)

On November 27, 1830, Saint Catherine Labouré saw Mary standing on what seemed to be half a globe and holding a golden globe in her hands as if offering it to heaven. On the globe was the word “France,” and our Lady explained that the globe represented the whole world, but especially France. The times were difficult in France then, especially for the poor who were unemployed and often refugees from the many wars of the time. France was first to experience many of those troubles which ultimately reached many other parts of the world and are even present today. Streaming from rings on Mary's fingers as she

we are as a person, but yet no one seems to care when one person steals another's reputation or character. Rarely do people get punished and unlike money and material goods it is hard to give back.

Have we every...

- told on someone with the intention of hurting that person
- told on someone when we did not have the duty to tell on that person (it was none of our business)
- accused a person of a sin which they did not commit
- accused someone of a sinful intention, when in fact we did not know what they intended at all
- denied or lessened a persons good qualities and good actions
- refused to give someone their due praise by remaining silent when we where asked about that person
- willingly listened to others talk bad about a person and destroy another's reputation and made no effort to stop the conversation
- felt joy when detraction takes place and another's reputation is hurt

Of the list above which do you personally struggle the most with? If you feel comfortable, give examples of when you have fell into one of the traps / situations above. What could be done to not act in the ways listed above?

Is it a sin to listen willingly to detraction? Yes, for we thus give the detractors occasion and encouragement. Therefore St. Bernard says: “Whether to detract is a greater sin than to listen to detraction, I will not decide. The devil sits on the tongue of the detractor as he does on the ear of the listener.” St. Paul expressly says: Calumniators shall not possess the kingdom of God (1 Cor. 6:10), and Solomon writes: My son, fear the Lord, and the king; and have nothing to do with detractors; for their destruction shall rise suddenly (Proverbs 24:22).

What ways in our society does detraction take place? Look at the tabloids, which make entertainment by detraction. A tabloid might even be reporting what is “true” but do they have the right to spread the “truth” to everyone when the truth hurts a person's reputation or image. Many times detraction and be in the form of stereotypes or prejudices against particular groups of people. A person can say, “Those people all do _____”. It might be true but that does not mean that it needs to be said.

the person and the person's parents and superiors. For example before talking to the person we might tell ten people about the situation, even using the person's name and ask, "What do you think I should do?" This seeking advice could be harmful because we are telling others about the person and could be harming their reputation.

The steward in the gospel was justly accused on account of the goods he had wasted; but there are many who lose their good name and honor by false accusations and malicious talk! Alas, what great wrongs do detracting tongues cause in this world! How mean a vice is detraction, how seldom attention is paid to its evil, how rarely the injury is repaired![18]

Activity - Toothpaste Contest

Have two or more contestants come to the front and give each a tube of toothpaste. On the count of three the contestants should press out all of the toothpaste as fast as they can. Check and see who the winner is and congratulate them. THEN... tell them the second part of the game. Whoever can get the toothpaste back in the tube the fastest is the winner... Count down and then see if they can do it. They will not be able to, just as when a person commits the sin of detraction it is very difficult to restore what has been said. The tube is the month and the paste is the harmful words that were said.

VIDEO – Pope Francis: if you speak ill of your brother, you kill him – POP CULTURE CONNECTION – 2:57

<http://youtu.be/Jbek57mtdUg>

Pope Francis spoke on the sins and grave dangers of what happens when we speak ill or gossip against our brothers and sisters.

MOVIE - "DOUBT" POP CULTURE CONNECTION – 2:54 minutes

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aq4q1OCIdQc>

The priest speaks in his homily an analogy about what gossip does to someone.

What is the greatest thing a person owns? What is the greatest thing you own? If I stole money or any other material thing from a person, I would be punished and everyone would say I was wrong to do it. After I was punished I would be asked to give back the money or material thing. Our "good" reputation is far more important than money or material things, it is who

held the globe were many rays of light. Mary explained that the rays symbolize the graces she obtains for those who ask for them. However, some of the gems on the rings were dark, and Mary explained that the rays and graces were available but did not come because no one had asked for them.[11]

Why did the Lord propose this parable? Asks St. Augustine, Not because that servant was a model for us to imitate. Nonetheless, the worldly-wise steward had an eye to the future. So too should the Christian have this determination to secure his eternal reward. If not, the steward puts him to shame.[12]

What are some examples of "things" that are regularly on your mind, take a lot of your time, and you have a passion for and enjoy? Is it possible to have that same passion for the service of God? There are some things in our life which we focus on more, care about more. These things have our attention, time, desire and energy. For example a person that cares a lot about cars and gets a second job to fix up their car. If this person is not fixing his car, cleaning his car or working to earn more money to spend on his car, he is probably driving his car around to show to people.

What if this same energy and care was put at the service of God? The "things" that we care about can be applied to anything. It could be fitness, money, grades, guys, girls, popularity. There is something about our humanity that gives us the drive to excel and take interest in things. This is why hobbies and interests are so important. It seems that everyone has some type of interest, hobby, group, person that they spend time and energy pursuing. Jesus praises the determination of humanity, and is asking us in this parable to apply that determination to the service of God. At times, it seems as if the children of this world are more resolute in the pursuit of their goals than we Christians. They live as if there existed only what is here below, and they single-mindedly focus their attention on that end.

What sacrifices do people make to improve their life-style? To what length and with what effort do people go to acquire wealth, power or fame? We Christians must put the same amount of zeal into the service of God. We have to make a heroic effort to win Heaven. What zeal men put into their earthly affairs! Dreaming of honors, striving for riches, bent on sensuality! Men and women, rich and poor, old and middle-aged

and young and even children: all of them alike. When you and I put the same zeal into the affairs of our soul, then we'll have a living and working faith. And there will be no obstacle that we cannot overcome in our apostolic works.[13]

What physical things can we focus on in service to God? In the material realm, our society should manifest an authentic concern for the needs of the poor that is shown in education, just remuneration[14], meaningful social security benefits and programs directed for the public welfare. It is the laity who must contend with those issues that relate to the Church's presence in the world: education, the defense of life, the protection of the environment, the protection of religious liberty, the effective witness of the Christian message in the media. The lay faithful ought to play their full role as citizens in all the legitimate avenues of social development. Christians should make their voice heard. And they should make their just rights prevail.[15]

What spiritual things can we focus on in the service of God? The chorus of Lift High the Cross says, "Lift high the cross, the love of Christ proclaim, Till all the world adore his sacred name." Are we as diligent as the shrewd servant to proclaim Christ? Are we willing to proclaim Christ with our thoughts, words and deeds until the whole world adores His sacred name? We cannot shirk from our responsibility. God loves us and we must make this known. Jesus is the world made flesh, love incarnate, so we proclaim the "love of Christ". We do not give up after we have found this love, or after our family and friends have found this love, we continue to lift high the cross and proclaim the love of Christ until the whole world have found this love.

What can cause us to loose zeal or determination in "winning heaven"? If we have no belief in heaven then heaven will not be our goal, our goal will not be to be with God for all eternity. We will focus only on the things of the earth, the here and now. If we feel like we have already "won heaven" then it is not necessary to have zeal or determination. Just like in a sports game, when a team is far ahead and knows they are going to win they pull out the starters and begin to not care. If we believe that we are already "saved" we can easily loose zeal and determination. If we care more about winning earth than heaven, the things of this world will become a distraction and even an obstacle.

What have been some hobbies, interests, activity, passions in your life that have faded away? Were they worthwhile, did they last? Jesus wants us to have a real interest in his things. This is the only objective that is truly worthwhile. No ideal is comparable to that of serving Christ, of using the talents we have been given as means to that everlasting goodness.

Detraction (Gossip) - Lesson and Discussion[16]

What does "Detraction" mean? Detraction is "Revealing something about another that is true but harmful to that person's reputation. It is forbidden to reveal another person's secret faults or defects, unless there is proportionate good involved. The fact that something is true does not, of itself, justify its disclosure. Detraction is a sin against justice. It robs one of what most people consider more important than riches, since a person has a strict right to his or her reputation whether it is deserved or not. (Etyim. Latin *detractio*, a withdrawal)"[17]

Give some examples of how we justify gossip and detract by saying "but it is true". Why should "true" things still not be talked about? If it is "true" does it make it right to share? There are many true things about all of our lives. Just because it is true does not mean that we are proud of it and it does not mean that others need to know about it. "True" things should not be talked about if they bring scandal, if they hurt a person's reputation or character, if they do not bring about "good" in proportion to the harm or hurt they could cause. Remember, just because it is true does not mean it needs to be shared.

Is it ever right to reveal another person's faults? Yes, if the amount of harm that is done by doing so will be made up by the good that will occur because the fault was revealed. For example if you friend is doing something wrong and you feel you should tell their parents, teacher, priest, etc. Your friend will be embarrassed and maybe get punished but there may be great good that comes from it, in fact more good than the harm of embarrassment or punishment. **What are some examples of this? If we are not sure whether we should say anything, what should we do?** First, we should talk to our neighbor personally and in a gentle way. If he does not listen, we can make known his faults to his parents or superiors for the sake of punishment and reformation. Once again it is our duty to help the person out of sin, to say nothing could help keep them in sin. The danger we get into is when talk to people other than