

1. Read — Read the verses slowly and prayerfully several times. Write down any words or phrases that seem to stand out:

2. Meditate — Now begin to reflect on the verses and ask God what it means and how he wants to speak to you through the passage. **God what are you saying to me through this?**

3. Pray — Respond from your heart to what God has been saying to you. **What do you want me to know?** Write down your prayer to him or record whatever he says to you.

4. Contemplate — Be quiet before the Lord enjoying His presence.

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**How is God calling you to act in response to what he has shown you?**

[1] Mark 10:18

[2] My Catholic Faith

[3] CCC 952

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

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# Quick Connect

**What is the Gospel saying? Luke 16:1-13 — Pg. 1**

**What is the Church saying Past and Present? Pages 1-3**

**What is God saying to you through this passage? Page 4**

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

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.”

## **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.

**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 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 we 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.”

**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.