

Link to Liturgy



15th Sunday in Ordinary Time The Good Samaritan

Lessons and Discussions

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“Who is my neighbor?”

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“when he saw him, he passed by on the opposite side”

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“He approached the victim, poured oil and wine over his wounds, and bandaged them.”

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“The one who treated him with mercy.”

Page 22 – Homosexuality

“went off leaving him half-dead”

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Communion Antiphon – Roman Missal

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

*Passer invenit**Ps 84 (83): 4, 5*

T HE sparrow has found herself a home, * and the
 turtle dove a nest in which to lay her young: at your
 altars, O Lord of hosts, my King and my God! Blessed
 are they who dwell in your house, they shall praise you
 for e-ver and e- ver.

Alternate options:

For the Fruit of All Creation
 Jesus Shall Reign
 Ye Watchers and Ye Holy Ones

Collect – Roman Missal

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.
 Amen O God, who show the light of your truth
 to those who go astray,
 so that they may return to the right path,
 give all who for the faith they possess
 are accounted Christians
 the grace to reject whatever is contrary to the name of Christ
 and to strive after all that does it honor.

[77] CCC 2357

[78] CCC 2357

[79] Hardon, The Catholic Catechism pg. 354-355

[80] Gen. 19:1-29

[81] Romans 1:24-27

[82] 1 Cor. 6:9

[83] 1 Tim 1:10

[84] Mark 10:6-10

[85] CCC 2359

[86] Hardon, Catholic Catechism, pg. 354

[87] CCC 2358

- [20] Fr. Gabriel, *Divine Intimacy* Vol. III, pg. 119
 [21] Fernandez, *In Conversation with God* 4, 21.3
 [22] Fernandez, *In Conversation with God* 4, 21.3
 [23] Fernandez, *In Conversation with God* 4, 21.3
 [24] Fernandez, *In Conversation with God* 4, 21.3
 [25] Second Vatican Council, *Gaudium et spes*, 38
 [26] Hardon, *Modern Catholic Dictionary*, pg. 389
 [27] CCC 1853
 [28] The Order of the Mass; Confiteor
 [29] Fernandez, *In Conversation with God* 4, 21.2
 [30] Navarre Bible, *Gospel of Luke* pg. 138
 [31] Navarre Bible, *Gospel of Luke* pg. 138
 [32] CCC 2277
 [33] Hardon, *Modern Catholic Dictionary* pg. 28
 [34] *Church's Year* pg. 394
 [35] Mk. 6:12, 13
 [36] Sess. XIV, c.i.
 [37] CCC 1503
 [38] CCC 1509
 [39] James 5:14-15
 [40] *Homilies on Leviticus* 2:4
 [41] *The Sacramentary of Serapion* 29:1
 [42] *The Church's Year*, pg. 394
 [43] CCC 1532
 [44] Goffines, *The Church's Year* pgs. 394-395
 [45] 2 Corinthians 12:7
 [46] 2 Corinthians 12:8-9
 [47] cf. Canon 1004
 [48] cf. CCC 1514
 [49] cf. CCC 1515
 [50] CCC 1525
 [51] CCC 1516
 [52] Sess. XIV, c. 3
 [53] Goffine, *The Church's Year* pg. 395
 [54] Goffines, *The Church's Year* pg. 395-396
 [55] CCC 1513
 [56] CCC 1951
 [57] cf. CCC 1955
 [58] CCC 1951
 [59] Hardon, *Modern Catholic Dictionary*, pg. 193
 [60] Hardon, *Modern Catholic Dictionary*, pg. 164
 [61] Leo XIII, *Libertas praestantissimum*, 597.
 [62] Hardon, *Modern Catholic Dictionary* pg. 370
 [63] Romans 2:12-16
 [64] Fr. Gabriel, *Divine Intimacy* Vol. III, pg. 119
 [65] St. John Mary Vianney, *Selected sermons*, Twenty-second Sunday after Pentecost
 [66] Hardon, *Modern Catholic Dictionary*, pg. 259
 [67] http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Blue_law
 [68] Romans 1:19-23
 [69] Martin Luther King, Jr.; "Letter from a Birmingham Jail"; April 16, 1953
 [70] cf. Deut. 30:10
 [71] cf. CCC 1961
 [72] CCC 1965
 [73] CCC 1984-1985
 [74] CCC 2357
 [75] Msgr. E. James Hart; *From the Pastor's Desk – Concerning my recent decision*
 [76] CCC 2359

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

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

Gospel Reading – Luke 10:25-37 – Roman Missal

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

There was a scholar of the law who stood up to test Him and said, "Teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal life?" Jesus said to him, "What is written in the law? How do you read it?" He said in reply, "*You shall love the Lord, your God, with all your heart, with all your being, with all your strength, and with all your mind, and your neighbor as yourself.*" He replied to him, "You have answered correctly; do this and you will live."

But because he wished to justify himself, he said to Jesus, "And who is my neighbor?" Jesus replied, "A man fell victim to robbers as he went down from Jerusalem to Jericho. They stripped and beat him and went off leaving him half-dead. A priest happened to be going down that road, but when he saw him, he passed by on the opposite side. Likewise a Levite came to the place, and when he saw him, he passed by on the opposite side. But a Samaritan traveler who came upon him was moved with compassion at the sight. He approached the victim, poured oil and wine over his wounds, and bandaged them. Then he lifted him up on his own animal, took him to an inn, and cared for him. The next day he took out two silver coins and gave them to the innkeeper with the instruction, 'Take care of him. If you spend more than what I have given you, I shall repay you on my way back.' Which of these three, in your opinion, was neighbor to the robbers' victim?" He answered, "The one who treated him with mercy." Jesus said to him, "Go and do likewise."

The Gospel of the Lord.
 - Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ

Spiritual Reading – Office of Readings – 15th Sunday of Ordinary Time

From the beginning of the treatise On the Mysteries by Saint

Ambrose, Bishop
Catechesis on the rites preceding baptism

We gave a daily instruction on right conduct when the readings were taken from the history of the patriarchs or the maxims of Proverbs. These readings were intended to instruct and train you, so that you might grow accustomed to the ways of our forefathers, entering into their paths and walking in their footsteps, in obedience to God's commands.

Now the season reminds us that we must speak of the mysteries, setting forth the meaning of the sacraments. If we had thought fit to teach these things to those not yet initiated through baptism, we should be considered traitors rather than teachers. Then, too, the light of the mysteries is of itself more effective where people do not know what to expect than where some instruction has been given beforehand. Open then your ears. Enjoy the fragrance of eternal life, breathed on you by means of the sacraments. We explained this to you as we celebrated the mystery of "the opening" when we said: *Effetha, that is, be opened*. Everyone who was to come for the grace of baptism had to understand what he was to be asked, and must remember what he was to answer. This mystery was celebrated by Christ when he healed the man who was deaf and dumb, in the Gospel which we proclaimed to you.

After this, the holy of holies was opened up for you; you entered into the sacred place of regeneration. Recall what you were asked; remember what you answered. You renounced the devil and his works, the world and its dissipation and sensuality. Your words are recorded, not on a monument to the dead but in the book of the living.

There you saw the Levite, you saw the priest, you saw the high priest. Do not consider their outward form but the grace given by their ministries. You spoke in the presence of angels, as it is written: *The lips of a priest guard knowledge, and men seek the law from his mouth, for he is the angel of the Lord almighty*. There is no room for deception, no room for denial. He is an angel whose message is the kingdom of Christ and eternal life. You must judge him, not by his appearance but by his office. Remember what he handed on to you, weigh up his value, and so acknowledge his standing.

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 of mercy towards us; and after this our exile, show unto us the blessed fruit of thy 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 cooperation 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] Fernandez, In Conversation with God 4, 21.1
- [2] Fernandez, In Conversation with God 4, 21.1
- [3] The Navarre Bible, Luke pg. 137
- [4] Fr. Gabriel, Divine Intimacy Vol. III, pg. 119
- [5] The Penny Catechism
- [6] The Navarre Bible, Luke pg. 137-138
- [7] Fernandez, In Conversation with God 4, 21.1
- [8] Fernandez, In Conversation with God 4, 21.1
- [9] Cardinal m. Gonzalez Martin, Free, in Charity, p. 58
- [10] Fernandez, In Conversation with God 4, 21.1
- [11] Fr. Goffines, The Church's Year pg. 392- 393
- [12] Fr. Goffines, The Church's Year pg. 393
- [13] Blessed John Paul II; *Love and Responsibility*
- [14] Ibid.
- [15] CCC 1825
- [16] Luke 23:34
- [17] Acts 7:60
- [18] The Navarre Bible, Luke pg. 137
- [19] Fr. Goffines, The Church's Year pg. 393

in my thoughts and in my words,
 in what I have done,
 and in what I have failed to do;
(lightly strike the breast)
 through my fault
 through my fault
 through my most grievous fault
 Therefore, I ask blessed Mary, ever virgin,
 all the angels and saints,
 and you, my brothers and sisters,
 to pray for me to the Lord our God.
 In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.
 Amen

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-gi-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 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

You entered to confront your enemy, for you intended to renounce him to his face. You turned toward the east, for one who renounces the devil turns toward Christ and fixes his gaze directly on him.

Responsory – Office of Readings – Titus 3:3; Ephesians 2:3

We were once foolish, disobedient, and misled. We then lived in malice and envy. Hateful ourselves, we hated one another.
 – Because of His mercy, God has saved us through the baptism of rebirth and the renewal of the Holy Spirit.

All our lives were once ruled by physical desires, and by nature we deserved God’s anger.
 – Because of His mercy, God has saved us through the baptism of rebirth and the renewal of the Holy Spirit.

Who is My Neighbor – Lesson and Discussion

“And who is my neighbor?”

Why did the scholar ask Jesus, “Who is my neighbor?” “But among the Jews there was a certain vagueness about the word ‘neighbor’: it wasn’t clear whether it included only the members of one’s own clan, or one’s friends, or the entire chosen people. Opinions varied on the subject, and that was why the doctor of the Law asked Our Lord, *Who is my neighbor?* To whom should I show all this love and mercy?”[1]

Who is our neighbor according to Jesus? Jesus answers this question clearly in today’s parable. “This is my neighbor: he is a man, any man whoever who has need of me. Our Lord makes no specific reference to race, friendship, or blood connection. Our neighbor is anyone who is close to us and has need of help. Nothing is said of his country, or of his background or social condition: *homo quidam*, just a man, a human being.”[2]

“This parable leaves no doubt about who our neighbor is – anyone (without distinction of race or relationship) who needs our help; nor about how we should love him – by taking pity on him, being compassionate towards his spiritual or corporal needs; and it is not just a matter of having the right feeling towards him: we must do something, we must generously serve him.”[3]

“The conclusion is clear: we are not to make distinctions, either of religion or nationality, of friend or foe; anyone in need of help

is our ‘neighbor’ and must be loved as we each love ourselves.”[4]

“Jesus Christ commands us to love one another – that is, all persons without exception – for His sake.”[5] There may be times when we do not want to or feel like loving all people, but it is during these times that we love them anyway for the sake of Christ. We pray in the Chaplet of Divine Mercy, “for the sake of His sorrowful passion have mercy on us and on the whole world.” For the sake of Jesus and for the sake of His sorrowful passion, the least that we can do is love one another without exception. Saint Benedict’s rule for monks gives some practical ways to love one another. The rule says, “to love one’s neighbor as oneself, to honor all men, not to do to another what one would not have done to oneself, not to forsake charity, to hate no man, to console the sorrowing, to bury the dead, to reverence the old, to love the young, to relieve the poor, to clothe the naked, to visit the sick, to help the afflicted, to do no wrong to anyone.”

What should we do for our neighbor? Jesus helps answer this question in the parable when He speaks of the works of mercy. “Christians, who should be disciples of Christ, should share His love and compassion, never distancing themselves from others’ needs. One way to express love for one’s neighbor is to perform the ‘works of mercy,’ which get their name from the fact that they are not duties in justice. There are fourteen such works, seven spiritual and seven corporal. The spiritual are: To convert the sinner; To instruct the ignorant; To counsel the doubtful; To comfort the sorrowful; To bear wrongs patiently; To forgive injuries; To pray for the living and the dead. The corporal works are: To feed the hungry; To give drink to the thirsty; To clothe the naked; To shelter the homeless; To visit the sick; To visit the imprisoned; To bury the dead.”[6]

“As we go through life we come across many cases of people who have been similarly injured and left destitute and half-dead in body and soul. Our concern to help them, which springs from our closeness to Jesus, broadens our heart and prevents us from falling into narrow-mindedness and selfishness. One discovers people who have been hurt by misunderstanding and loneliness, or by the absence of the most basic human necessities; people humiliated in their dignity as persons; people who have been shamefully robbed of their most elementary rights in ways which cry to heaven for vengeance. Christian men and

sign of unjust discrimination in their regard should be avoided. These persons are called to fulfill God’s will in their lives and, if they are Christians, to unite to the sacrifice of the Lord’s Cross the difficulties they may encounter from their condition.”[87] This does not mean that we accept the lifestyle and sexual choices that one makes in homosexual acts. Likewise, we do not accept and approve of those who are heterosexual and have sex before marriage or spouses committing adultery. We are to be loving and understanding of peoples struggles and be there to help however we can.

VIDEO – Check Out Courage – POP CULTURE CONNECTION – 7:36

http://youtu.be/O_YOIHmeGRw

VIDEO – COURAGE – POP CULTURE CONNECTION – 7:48

<http://youtu.be/7lkm05DYwEM>

In the videos, a gentleman speaks about how the apostolate Courage is helping him with his same-sex attraction and his addiction to pornography. He shares some insights about Courage and also how coming back to the Church has really helped him let go of things in his past life. If there is a Catholic who is reading this (or if you know someone) that is struggling with same-sex attraction and is looking for a group of men who can help with this struggle while still being an amazing practicing Catholic, check out their website: www.couragerc.net

VIDEO – “Yes to You” – POP CULTURE CONNECTION – 2:38

<http://youtu.be/bXq4izbFgAM>

As Catholics, we should show truth, clarity, and charity when speaking about these things. We must help people understand that if someone has a homosexual tendency it does not define their sole identity. We say no to the sins that people commit, but we say yes to the soul. We still want and need every living soul to help build God’s Kingdom. We must do this by picking up our crosses and practicing chastity.

Profession of Faith or Popular Devotion – Penitential Rite

During Mass we start by confessing and seeking forgiveness because of our sins against God.

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

I confess to almighty God,
and to you, my brothers and sisters,
that I have greatly sinned

al sin is a grave offense against God. We see that sins in our society such as adultery, fornication, greed, and homosexuality are both glorified and endorsed. We must warn those that are in habitual sin

What if the majority of people are okay with homosexuality?

Truth is not determined by what people think is acceptable. At one point, slavery was considered acceptable in many countries. In America, most thought that “separate but equal” was acceptable. Today there are many people who think that abortion is acceptable. Thankfully over time these ideas have changed. Even if the vast majority of people think that a gay lifestyle is acceptable, that does not make it Truth or acceptable to God. Servant of God, Archbishop Fulton Sheen once said, “Moral principles do not depend on a majority vote. Wrong is wrong, even if everybody is wrong. Right is right, even if nobody is right.” “...But their increase in certain affluent cultures has led some people to wonder if, perhaps, they are all that sinful. What can be so wrong about ‘relieving emotional pressure’ or, in the case of homosexuals, about two men or two women ‘being in love’? Writers who defend the practices generally follow the expedient of reducing the morality of human acts to the intention. How a person enjoys sexual pleasure is unimportant; what matters is the reason why. ...The Church has consistently proscribed homosexuality and masturbation as objectively contrary to the will of God. At the same time, she recognizes that the subjective responsibility of the persons involved is greatly affected by the culture in which they live. As a society’s attitudes change toward sexual activity outside of marriage, it becomes increasingly difficult for men and women to maintain their Christian convictions and accept the Church’s teaching.”[86]

What if there are a lot of homosexuals in the world? Whether there is one or one billion, it does not matter. They are called by Christ to live a chaste life. It is the same as if there were just one or one billion adulterers, prostitutes, polygamists, or fornicators.

Does the Catholic Church hate people with same sex attraction? The Catholic Church does not hate people with same-sex attractions. The Church hates no one. We hate sin, not the sinners. The Church understands the awkward and difficult journey of one who has homosexual attractions. In fact, in the Catechism, the Church teaches that all are to give absolute respect, dignity, and charity to those who are homosexual. “...They must be accepted with respect, compassion, and sensitivity. Every

women can never pass by on the other side, as some of the individuals in the parable did.”[7]

How do we help our neighbor? While concern for the injuries of our fellow man is important, we should not forget to preach the Gospel. Yes, we show this in our actions, but we must not be afraid to share Jesus with our lips. “A Christian cannot be uninvolved in the human and social progress of making, but the overriding concern to enlighten men’s minds in regard to faith and the religious life cannot ever be relegated to second place.”[8] Cardinal Gonzalez Martin says, “At times, before preaching the Faith, we may first have to approach the man lying at the roadside and tend to his injuries. But as Christians we can never overlook the need to spread the Faith and to help people understand it better, and to propagate the Christian meaning of life.”[9] “Every day we also meet the man who has left half dead, either because he has not been taught the elementary truths of the Faith, or because they have been stolen from him by the effects of others’ bad example, or by media-conditioning. We can never forget that the Faith is the greatest treasure man has, much more important than all material and human values.”[10]

Why should we love our neighbor? The simple answer is because God demands this of us. However, there are other reasons. Here are some Scripture verses that explore the need to love our neighbor: “We are not only according to nature brothers and sisters in Adam, but also according to grace in Christ, and we would have to be ashamed before animals, if we would allow ourselves to be surpassed in the love which they bear one to another (Ecclus. 13:19); all our neighbors are the image and likeness of God, bought by the blood of Jesus, and are adopted children, called to heaven, as we are; the example of Christ who loved us, when we were yet His enemies (Rom. 5:10), and gave Himself for us unto death, ought to incite us to love them. But can we be His disciples, if we do not follow Him, and if we do not bear in us the mark of His disciples, i.e., the love of our neighbor? (Jn. 13:35) Finally, the necessity of the love for our neighbor ought to compel us, as it were, to it; for without it, we cannot be saved. He that loveth not, says St. John abideth in death (1 John 3:14), and he that loveth not his brother, whom he seeth, how can he love God whom he seeth not? (1 Jn. 4:20) because he transgresses one of the greatest commandments of God, and does not fulfill the law (Romans 13:10).”[11]

Why is it necessary to have genuine love for our neighbor?

If we love our neighbor then we are showing our love for God. We do not boast in helping the injured, but do it because we love God and wish to serve Him and those that He created in His image and likeness. “It must tend to God, that is, we must love our neighbor only in and for God, because God commands it, and it is pleasing to Him. For to love our neighbor on account of a natural inclination, or self-interest, or some other still less honorable reason, is only a natural, animal love, in no way different from the love of the heathens; for the heathens also love and salute those who love and salute them in turn. (Mt. 5:46)”[12] Blessed Pope John Paul II spoke about genuine love in his book *Love and Responsibility*. He said, “A person's rightful due is to be treated as an object of love, not as an object for use.”[13] When we love someone only because we want something in return, this is not love, but manipulation and use. We do not have to love, but rather are free to love. In fact, God has given us freedom so that we can love. Love cannot be without sacrifice. For each time we choose to love, we choose not necessarily what we want, but what is good for another. We use our freedom not for self, but for the good of another. “Limitation of one's freedom might seem to be something negative and unpleasant, but love makes it a positive, joyful, and creative thing. Freedom exists for the sake of love.”[14]

“Christ died out of love for us, while we were still ‘enemies.’ The Lord asks us to love as He does, even our *enemies*, to make ourselves the neighbor of those farthest away, and to love children and the poor as Christ Himself.”[15]

The Penny Catechism says, “We are bound to love our enemies; not only by forgiving them from our hearts, but also by wishing them well, and praying for this.” Saint Benedict adds in his rule that we should not render evil for evil, but pray for one's enemies in the love of Christ and make peace with one's adversary before sundown. While suffocating on the cross, Jesus said, “Father forgive them for they know not what they do.”[16] In imitation of Jesus, Saint Stephen, the first martyr, cried out while being stoned, “Lord, do not hold this sin against them.”[17]

The Good Samaritan – Lesson and Discussion

“Go and do likewise”

Who is the Good Samaritan? Many times when we read a Gospel parable we think of ourselves as the one who is helping. In

“Do you not know that the unjust will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived; neither fornicators nor idolaters nor adulterers nor boy prostitutes nor sodomites (those who engage in homosexuality) nor thieves nor the greedy nor drunkards nor slanderers nor robbers will inherit the kingdom of God.”[82]

In speaking about the law, Saint Paul writes that the law is for those who are lawless like, “the unchaste, sodomites (those who engage in homosexuality), kidnapers, liars, perjurers, and whatever else is opposed to sound teaching.”[83]

Finally, Jesus says, “But from the beginning of creation, ‘God made them male and female. For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother [and be joined to his wife], and the two shall become one flesh.’ So they are no longer two but one flesh. Therefore what God has joined together, no human being must separate.”[84] Jesus was speaking about divorce in these verses, however it still applies to homosexuality or any other attack against sex, love, and marriage. In the beginning it was meant for one man and one woman to become one flesh. A man and man or woman and woman cannot become “one flesh”.

What is someone to do if they have homosexual tendencies?

They are called to practice chastity just like every other person. “Homosexual persons are called to chastity. By the virtues of self-mastery that teach them inner freedom, at times by the support of disinterested friendship, by prayer and sacramental grace, they can and should gradually and resolutely approach Christian perfection.”[85] Those who have homosexual tendencies have a unique cross to carry that can be extremely difficult at times, but it is one they must carry in order to reach heaven. We all have our own temptations and sins that we are not proud of. The Church is here to strengthen us, help us to not sin anymore, and most importantly to lead us to heaven.

What if someone does not want to change? That is their choice and their free will. Just as if an adulterer does not want to change and continues to cheat on their spouse, there is nothing that can stop them from changing their actions. The Church does not force us to change. She warns us when we are not following God's law and wishes for us to repent. The Church worries for all souls. She wishes to draw everyone in, bring them to their fullest potential, and eventually be with Christ forever. Persistence in sin is a sin against the Holy Spirit. To stay in habitu-

clination is disordered, and if the inclination is acted upon it is a moral evil.

How can you prove that homosexuality is not natural? If homosexuality was in accordance with Natural Law, then we would be able to apply it to everyone in nature and it would fit. With this logic, say that hypothetically every human person that is born this day is a homosexual. Is this natural? No, because within 100 years the entire species would become extinct. This applies not just to human beings, but with every species on the planet. Biologically we are created to love and to be in a community – family. However, this can become disordered due to sin, and what is obvious and natural can lead to unnatural things.

What if someone is born with same sex attraction? First, there is no scientific proof that people are born gay. The debate still rages on and the Church say, “Its psychological genesis remains largely unexplained.”[78] There have been many breakthroughs proving though that homosexuality is not genetic, but predominately due to culture and behavioral upbringing. “Pastoral psychologists have also connected homosexuality with disoriented relations between child and parents, and with imbalanced sense of guilt, exorbitant malice, and inner depression.”[79] Secondly, Even if we do not know why people have same-sex attractions, it does not permit the acts of a gay lifestyle. For example, if someone is born with a biological tendency to be an alcoholic, that person should not be given a pass to get drunk all the time. They must practice temperance and self-control.

Where in Scripture does it speak against homosexuality?

The first example is in the book of Genesis when Lot tries to keep some of the men safe from other men who came to have sex with them in Sodom and Gomorrah.[80] Here are some others:

“...Therefore, God handed them over to impurity through the lusts of their hearts for the mutual degradation of their bodies. They exchanged the truth of God for a lie and revered and worshiped the creature rather than the creator, who is blessed forever. Amen. Therefore, God handed them over to degrading passions. Their females exchanged natural relations for unnatural, and the males likewise gave up natural relations with females and burned with lust for one another. Males did shameful things with males and thus received in their own persons the due penalty for their perversity.”[81]

this parable however, we are the one lying on the ground dying and Jesus is the Good Samaritan. “Following other Fathers, St. Augustine (De verbis Domini sermons, 37) identifies the good Samaritan with our Lord, and the waylaid man with Adam... Moved by compassion and piety, He comes down to earth to cure man’s wounds, making them His own (Is. 53:4; Mt. 8:17; 1Pet. 2:24; 1 Jn. 3:5). In fact, we often see Jesus being moved by man’s suffering (cf. Mt. 9:36; Mk. 1:41; Lk. 7:13). And St. John says: ‘in this the love of God was made manifest among us, that God sent His only Son into the world, so that we might live through Him. In this is love, not that we loved God but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the expiation for our sins. Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another’ (1 Jn. 4:9-11)”[18] The reason that we see ourselves as the Good Samaritan is that we want to strive to be like him. We should want to strive to be like Christ. Jesus usually reveals Himself as the character: I am the door; I am the gate, I am the Good Shepherd, etc. Here Jesus wants us to think and slowly reveals how much compassion and love He has for us.

TV COMMERCIAL - I want to be like Mike – POP CULTURE CONNECTION – 0:59

http://youtu.be/bOAGiq9j_Ak

This commercial shows people wanting to be like Michael Jordan. Growing up, many people wish that they could be like their favorite athlete, actor, or singer and try to imitate their actions and moves. We should strive to imitate the actions of Christ and the Good Samaritan.

What is the spiritual sense of today’s Gospel reading?

“According to the interpretation of the Fathers, our father Adam, and hence the whole human race is to be understood by the one who had fallen among robbers. The human race, which through the disobedience of Adam fell into the power of Satan and his angels, was robbed of original justice and the grace of God, and moreover, was wounded and weakened in all the powers of the soul by evil concupiscence. The priest and the Levite who represent the Old Law, would not and could not repair this misfortune; but Christ, the true Samaritan, embraced the interests of the wounded man, inasmuch as He poured the oil of His grace, and the wine of His blood into the wounds of man’s soul, and thus healed him, and inasmuch as He led him by baptism into the inn of His Church, and there entrusted him to His priests for further care and nursing. Thank Christ, the Good Samaritan, for

this great love and care for you, and endeavor to make good use of His blessings by your co-operation.”[19]

“In addition the parable forced the doctor of the law to recognize that the law itself had been fulfilled, not by men who were especially learned in it like the priest and the Levite, but by a Samaritan whom the Jews looked upon as an unbeliever and a sinner; it was this very person who was being proposed as a model to those of the pharisaic mentality who considered themselves just, a sinless observer of the law.”[20]

What actions did the Good Samaritan take? The Samaritan shows us the virtue of compassion. “The Samaritan’s compassion was not a purely theoretical and ineffective one. On the contrary, he managed to offer the man practical assistance. What he did was not perhaps very heroic in itself, but it was what the circumstances called for.”[21]

The Samaritan first “went up to him”. This is such a simple gesture, but is one that the priest and the Levite were unwilling to do. “...we cannot just observe the situation from a distance.”[22] If we stand at a distance as the world burns then we burn too. This leads to the next step, which was that “he took care of him.” The golden rule is being shown, “do unto others as you would have them do unto you.” The call from our Lord is loud and clear, “it consists in doing whatever needs to be done in each individual case.”[23]

ACTIVITY - George MacDonald's “Obedience”

Read the following poem by George MacDonald. **How does the man in the poem choose to be like the Good Samaritan? How does he imitate the Good Samaritan who, “went up to him” and “took care of him”?**

I said, "Let me walk in the fields."
He said, "No, walk in the town."
I said, "There are no flowers there."
He said, "No flowers but a crown."

I said, "But the skies are black!
There's nothing but noise and din."
And He wept and sent me back;
"There is more," He said.

We must remember and teach the following:

1. We cannot treat homosexual and heterosexual attractions equally, they are not the same.

“To treat sexual orientation in this manner is not in accordance with the moral teaching of our Catholic Faith. Because not only does our faith, following the natural law, teach us that ‘homosexual acts are intrinsically disordered and can in no case be approved of,’ (Persona Humana, no. 8), it also teaches us that same-sex orientation ‘...is a more or less strong tendency ordered toward an intrinsic moral evil, and thus the inclination itself must be seen as an objective disorder’ (Pastoral Care Of Homosexual Persons, the CDF, No. 3). Clearly, the Church here teaches that this tendency, same-sex or homosexual orientation is neither neutral nor good, but an inclination to an objective evil. The reason for this clarification is then stated: “Lest they (all the faithful and all persons of good will) be led to believe that the living out of this orientation in homosexual activity is a morally acceptable option. It is not” (PCHP, the CDF, no. 3). Therefore, according Catholic teaching, same-sex orientation is not normal, it is not neutral, it is not good...”[75]

2. Homosexual inclination or orientation is objectively disordered and ordered toward an objective evil.

3. Homosexual actions are intrinsically disordered and can in no case be approved of.

4. We must help homosexuals to carry their Cross and in the midst of a disordered orientation to achieve perfection and holiness. We are to show charity, not hatred or persecution. “Homosexual persons are called to chastity. By the virtues of self-mastery that teach them inner freedom, at times by the support of disinterested friendship, by prayer and sacramental grace, they can and should gradually and resolutely approach Christian perfection.”[76] **Why is it considered a “disordered”?** It is disordered in accordance with the Natural Law. “They are contrary to the natural from genuine affective and sexual complementarity.”[77] The Natural Law identifies one male and one female because of the sexual complementarity of the sex organs to be able to reproduce. More than that, the qualities of masculinity and femininity that differ between the sexes complete one another, their marriage, and their family. The Church is not saying that the person is evil, what the Church is saying is that the in-

dom.”[73] Jesus encompasses all of the laws and through the parable of the Good Samaritan, shows how the law should be lived. He shows that a Samaritan, who had little to no status in the Old Law, has status according to the Eternal Law (Natural and Divine) thus we are called to go to the aid of the Samaritan.

Homosexuality – Lesson and Discussion

“went off leaving him half dead”

The parable talks about a man who was robbed, beaten, and left half dead. This represents humanity. There are various sins that have caused us to be left dying on the side of the street. Sin, in any case, causes us to be left dying on the side of the street. Sin separates us from God and from man. One sin in particular that has left us dying is the abuses of our sexuality. The Natural Law has been bent and broken to fit the norms of the culture rather than adhere to the order and holy will of God. One sin in particular is homosexual activity and the glorification of the gay culture.

This lesson will focus on the basics of homosexuality. If you wish to learn more about so-called gay marriage and overall sexuality, chastity, and attacks against chastity, please go to these lessons and packets:

[\[See also Link to Liturgy Lesson – Gay Marriage?\]](#)

[\[See also Link to Liturgy Series – Chastity: The Gift of Self\]](#)

What is homosexuality? “Homosexuality refers to relations between men or between women who experience an exclusive or predominant sexual attraction toward persons of the same sex. It has taken a great variety of forms through the centuries and in different cultures.... Basing itself on Sacred Scripture, which presents homosexual acts as acts of grave depravity, tradition has always declared that ‘homosexual acts are intrinsically disordered.’ ...Under no circumstances can they be approved.”[74] To help explain what the Catechism is saying, anyone who engages in homosexual acts is committing a grave sin that is an intrinsic evil. Catholics who identify themselves as homosexuals and do not act on these tendencies are not in sin. They are actually living out the faith very well by overcoming temptation just like everyone else is called to.

I said, "But the air is thick,
and fogs are veiling the sun."
He answered, "Yet souls are sick,
and souls in the dark undone."

I said, "I shall miss the light,
and friends will miss me, they say."
He answered, "Choose tonight,
if I should miss you, or if they."

I pleaded for time to be given.
He said, "Is it hard to decide?
It will not seem hard in heaven,
to have followed the steps of your Guide."

I cast one look at the fields,
then set my face to the town;
He said, "My child, do you yield?
Will you leave the flowers for the crown?"

Then into His hand went mine,
And into my heart came He;
And I walk in a light divine
The path I feared to see.

How are we called to be like the Good Samaritan? While the main spiritual sense of this parable is that Jesus is the Good Samaritan, at the end of the parable He instructs the doctor of the law and everyone to, “Go and do likewise”. Every day we are met with people who need charity in some way. The vast majority of the time it is in small matters, not heroic ones. We are called to first recognize the problems that people face and then see how we can help. “What we need first of all is a readiness to see the misfortunes of others, and not hurry through life so much that, when we meet with need and suffering, we easily find an excuse for passing by on the other side.”[24] We should never be afraid to step up in even the small and simple things. The Second Vatican Council says, “This love is not something reserved for important matters, but must be exercised above all in the ordinary circumstances of daily life.”[25] **What are some ordinary circumstances where we can bring this love?**

The Sin of Omission – Lesson and Discussion

“when he saw him, he passed by on the opposite side”

What is the sin of omission? It is the, “Willful neglect or positive refusal to perform some good action that one’s conscience urges one to do. Such omissions is morally culpable, and its gravity depends on the importance of what should have been done, on the person’s willfulness, and the circumstances of the situation.”[26]

Why is omission bad? Omission is bad because it is a form of sin. The Catechism teaches that sins can be classified by their actions or inactions. “Sins can be distinguished according to their objects, as can every human act; or according to the virtues they oppose, by excess or defect; or according to the commandments they violate. They can also be classed according to whether they concern God, neighbor, or oneself; they can be divided into spiritual and carnal sins, or again as sins in thought, word, deed, or omission. The root of sin is in the heart of man in his free will, according to the teaching of the Lord....But in the heart also resides charity, the source of the good and pure works, which sin wounds.”[27]

At Mass we seek forgiveness for the sin of omission when we say, “I confess...in what I have done and what I have failed to do”[28]. When we fail to do God’s will, we forsake or give up charity. Habitually giving up charity allows sin to enter our hearts.

How did the priest and the Levite commit the sin of omission? Omission can be sinful when we let ourselves become so important that we neglect helping others. The people who walked by did not hurt the person lying there dying, but they did not help him either. “Here Our Lord is speaking to us about sins of omission. Those who passed by on the other side did not inflict any fresh injuries on the abandoned and badly-wounded wayfarer; they did not steal whatever he had left, or insult him. They had worries of their own, they didn’t want any complications, they had important things to do. They gave greater importance to their own business than to the man in need. Therein lay their sin: they *passed by on the other side.*”[29]

TV – WWYD? Aiding the Fallen – POP CULTURE CONNECTION – 7:31

http://youtu.be/WnOt1ZSp_tw

This investigation shows what people would do if a person falls ill and/or hurt and shows a present day Good Samaritan.

only a legal but a moral responsibility to obey just laws. Conversely, one has a moral responsibility to disobey unjust laws. I would agree with St. Augustine that ‘an unjust law is no law at all.’ Now, what is the difference between the two? How does one determine whether a law is just or unjust? A just law is a man made code that squares with the moral law or the law of God. An unjust law is a code that is out of harmony with the moral law. To put it in the terms of St. Thomas Aquinas: An unjust law is a human law that is not rooted in eternal law and natural law. Any law that uplifts human personality is just. Any law that degrades human personality is unjust.”[69]

ACTIVITY – Human Laws- Are they just?

Make a list of any human law past or present in any country that contradicts the natural, divine, and or eternal law. Martin Luther King Jr. is protesting or disobeying human laws (segregation), which goes against the natural law that all humans are created equal. Some people want to associate the human laws of segregation as being the same as the human laws which regulate or outlaw abortion and human laws which outlaw so called “same-sex marriage”. Why are the human laws which outlaw so called “same-sex marriage” and “abortion” different than human laws which called for segregation? Marriage is defined by divine revelation (Genesis) as between one man and one woman. This is a revealed law of God, and thus human laws outlawing so called “same-sex marriage” are actually supporting the divine law. Abortion is the killing of an innocent child, which is murder and forbidden by the divine law (5th Commandment), and thus human laws outlawing abortion are in line with the divine law. Both the sanctity of life and marriage and family are also supported in natural law.

What does Jesus tell us concerning the Law? In the first reading, Moses spoke of the commandments that were written in the book of the law.[70] These laws were revealed to the people of Israel by God and contained many truths that were Natural Law. [71] Yet, as good as this law was, it was still imperfect. Jesus came to establish the New Law, which is perfect in Him. “The New Law or the Law of the Gospel is the perfection here on earth of the divine law, natural and revealed. It is the work of Christ and is expressed particularly in the Sermon on the Mount.”[72] “The Law...fulfills and surpasses the Old Law and brings it to perfection, through the Beatitudes of the Kingdom of heaven; its commandments, by reforming the heart, the root of human acts. The New Law is a law of love, a law of grace, a law of free-

laws may also implement divine law as well as natural law. An example of a human law in the past, which implemented the third commandment, “keep holy the Sabbath” is the blue laws. “Blue laws often prohibit an activity only during certain hours and there are usually exceptions to the prohibition of commerce, like grocery and drug stores.”[67] In many towns in American stores were closed, by law on Sundays out of respect for the third commandment.

Why do we need human laws? We need Human Law because while all of us have Natural Law ingrained in our souls, we can reject that law due to our free will. When someone rejects Natural Law or become a danger to society, they must be brought to justice.

Why is it easy for man to reject natural law if the natural law is written in our hearts and even the divine law revealed to us? Saint Paul answers this question in His letter to the Romans. “For what can be known about God is plain to them, because God has shown it to them. Ever since the creation of the world his invisible nature, namely, his eternal power and deity, has been clearly perceived in the things that have been made. So they are without excuse; for although they knew God they did not honor him as God or give thanks to him, but they became futile in their thinking and their senseless minds were darkened. Claiming to be wise, they became fools, and exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images resembling mortal man or birds or animals or reptiles.”[68] Due to original sin and the fall of man, man’s mind was darkened, and man has concupiscence, the tendency to sin. It is the grace of God that helps us to know clearly the natural and divine law and act in obedience to these laws.

What if human laws contradict to natural, divine, and/or eternal law? Many countries throughout the world enact human laws that are contrary to the natural, divine, and or eternal law. When a human law contradicts the natural, divine, and or eternal law we have a right and are obligated to disobey the civil / human law.

Martin Luther King Jr. quotes two saints regarding law in his *Letter from a Birmingham Jail*, “One may well ask: ‘How can you advocate breaking some laws and obeying others?’ The answer lies in the fact that there are two types of laws: just and unjust. I would be the first to advocate obeying just laws. One has not

Why did they neglect helping the dying man? Besides the possible reasons mentioned above, we have to look at the customs from the time of Jesus. One explanation could be that they (priest and Levite) thought that the man was already dead. “Very probably one reason why our Lord used this parable was to correct one of the excesses of false piety common among his contemporaries. According to the Law of Moses, contact with dead bodies involved legal impurity, from which one was cleansed by various ablutions (cf. Num. 19:11-22; Lev. 21:1-4, 11-12).”[30] However, this should not be an excuse for seeing if they need help or checking to see if the person was already dead. “These regulations were not meant to prevent people from helping the injured; they were designed for reasons of hygiene and respect for the dead. The aberration of the priest and the Levite in this parable consisted in this: they did not know for sure whether the man who had been assaulted was dead or not, and they preferred to apply a wrong interpretation of a secondary, ritualistic precept of the Law rather than obey the more important commandment of loving one’s neighbor and giving him whatever help one can.”[31]

What are some present day sins of omission? The Catechism specifically points out the sin of euthanasia, which is a grave sin of omission. “Thus an act or omission which, of itself or by intention, causes death in order to eliminate suffering constitutes a murder gravely contrary to the dignity of the human person and to the respect due to the living God, his Creator. The error of judgment into which one can fall in good faith does not change the nature of this murderous act, which must always be forbidden and excluded.”[32]

[\[See Also Link to Liturgy Lesson – Euthanasia\]](#)

Anointing of the Sick – Lesson and Discussion

“He approached the victim, poured oil and wine over his wounds and bandaged them.”

What is Anointing of the Sick? It is a “Sacrament of the New Law, instituted by Christ to give the sick spiritual aid and strength and to perfect spiritual health, including, if need be, the remission of sins.”[33]

Is Anointing of the Sick a Sacrament? “Yes, because it was instituted by Christ, and by its grace is conveyed to the sick through an outward sign.”[34]

When did Christ institute this Sacrament? We read in Mark's Gospel, "Going forth they preached that men should do penance: and they cast out many devils, and anointed with oil many that were sick, and healed them." [35]. The Council of Trent solidified this Sacrament stating, "This sacred Unction of the sick was instituted by Christ our Lord, as indicated by St. Mark, but recommended to the faithful and promulgated by the Apostle St. James, a relative of our Lord." [36]

Jesus always had a love and compassion for those who were sick, both physically and spiritually. The Catechism teaches, "Jesus has the power not only to heal, but also to forgive sins; He has come to heal the whole man, soul and body; he is the physician the sick have need of." [37] He has given this same mission of healing the sick to the Church. "Heal the sick!" The Church has received this charge from the Lord and strives to carry it out by taking care of the sick as well as by accompanying them with her prayer of intercession." [38]

What does Saint James say about Anointing of the Sick? The letter of James says, "Is anyone sick among you? Let him bring in the priests of the Church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord: and the prayer of faith shall save the sick man: and the Lord shall raise him up: and if he be in sin, they shall be forgiven." [39] Saint James would not have instructed the Church to perform this Sacrament if Jesus Christ did not already institute it.

What did the early Church Fathers believe? They believed and practiced this Sacrament. "The early Church Fathers recognized this Sacrament's role in the life of the Church. Around A.D. 250, Origen wrote that the penitent Christian 'does not shrink from declaring his sin to a priest of the Lord and from seeking medicine' . . . [of] which the Apostle James says: 'If then there is anyone sick, let him call the presbyters of the Church, and let them impose hands upon him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord; and the prayer of faith will save the sick man, and if he be in sins, they shall be forgiven him.'" [40]

In the year 350, Bishop Serapion wrote, "We beseech you, Savior of all men, you that have all virtue and power, Father of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, and we pray that you send down from heaven the healing power of the only-begotten [Son] upon this oil, so that for those who are anointed . . . it may be effected

We can see Natural Law expressed in the Scriptures. Saint Paul wrote, "All who sin outside the law will also perish without reference to it, and all who sin under the law will be judged in accordance with it. For it is not those who hear the law who are just in the sight of God; rather, those who observe the law will be justified. For when the Gentiles who do not have the law by nature observe the prescriptions of the law, they are a law for themselves even though they do not have the law. They show that the demands of the law are written in their hearts, while their conscience also bears witness and their conflicting thoughts accuse or even defend them on the day when, according to my gospel, God will judge people's hidden works through Christ Jesus." [63] Saint Paul shows that even those who may not have heard the Gospel will still be judged by the Natural Law that is in them and through the Divine Law, Jesus Christ.

Is Natural Law ambiguous? No, it is quite clear. The first reading and the Gospel reading deal with the law of God. This law is placed in our hearts from the beginning. God reveals it more clearly in order to draw us closer to Him. This is how grace builds on nature. The law is "not an abstract law, imposed solely from without, but inscribed in the heart of man from the first moment of creation; hence it was a law in harmony with his nature, responding to his essential needs, and suited to leading him toward full realization of himself according to God's purpose for him." [64]

All of Natural Law directs us to the love of God. St. John Vianney said, "Yes, our only occupation here on earth is that of loving God – that is, to start doing what we will be doing for all eternity. Why must we love God? Well, because our happiness consists in love of God; it can consist in nothing else. So, if we do not love God, we will always be unhappy; and if we wish to enjoy any consolation and relief in our pains, we will attain it only by recourse to love of God. If you want to be convinced of this, go and find the happiest man according to the world; if he does not love God, you will find that in fact he is really an unhappy man. And, on the contrary, if you discover the man most unhappy in the eyes of the world, you will see that because he loves God he is happy in every way. Oh my God, open the eyes of our souls, and we will seek our happiness where we truly can find it." [65]

What is Human Law? Human law is, "Legislation imposed by human authority, implementing the natural law." [66] Human

What is the highest form of law? Eternal Law is the highest form because “All law finds its first and ultimate truth in the eternal law.”[58]

What is Eternal Law? Eternal Law is the plan, order, and purpose of God. It is “The plan of divine wisdom, insofar as it directs all the actions and events of the universe. It is, therefore, the unchangeable effective decree of God binding the whole of creation to the fulfillment of its purpose, and to the use of such means for attaining this purpose as are adapted to each nature.”[59] Eternal Law is the over arching umbrella of all other laws.

What are the other laws? The other laws are Divine Law, Natural Law, and Human Law. This lesson will define Divine and Human Law, but will focus more on Natural Law.

What is Divine Law? Divine Law is closely related to Eternal Law. Divine Law is, “The eternal law of God, or the divine reason as governing the whole universe. God conceived as the Ruler of the Universe.”[60] The Divine Law is the “revealed” law through divine revelation and shown in the Scriptures, particularly in the New Testament. The eternal law, the plan of divine wisdom, cannot be completely known by man. What can be know by man is the divine law, which is the portion of the eternal law which God reveals to man. To “reveal” means to unveil. The divine law of God is unveiled to mankind through divine revelation which the Church teachings began with Adam and Eve and ends with the death of Saint John the Apostle, the last apostle. There is no “new” revelation or teachings; all that is taught is simply a reminder of what has already been revealed.

What is Natural Law? Pope Leo XII writes, “The natural law is written and engraved in the soul of each and every man, because it is human reason ordaining him to do good and forbidding him to sin...But this command of human reason would not have the force of law if it were not the voice and interpreter of a higher reason to which our spirit and our freedom must be submitted.”[61] Following up with this point, “It is therefore called natural law because everyone is subject to it from birth (natio), because it contains only those duties which are derivable from human nature itself, and because, absolutely speaking, its essentials can be grasped by the unaided light of human reason.”[62]

for the casting out of every disease and every bodily infirmity . . . for good grace and remission of sins.”[41]

What is the outward sign of this Sacrament? The outward sign is, “The anointing with holy oil, which is blessed by the bishop on Holy Thursday, and the prayer of the priest.”[42] This is the same holy oil that is used at our Baptism.

What inner grace does one receive from Anointing of the Sick? The Sacrament does not guarantee a full recovery of physical health. It can certainly do this, but the more important promise is the return to health of one’s soul back to God. The special graces received from Anointing of the Sick are:

- the uniting of the sick person to the passion of Christ, for his own good that of the whole Church;
- the strengthening, peace, and courage to endure in a Christian manner the sufferings of illness or old age;
- the forgiveness of sins, if the sick person was not able to obtain it through the sacrament of Penance;
- the restoration of health, if it is conducive to the salvation of his soul;
- the preparation for passing over to eternal life.”[43]

“It quiets our fear, illumines the gloom in which the soul is enveloped, fills it with pious and holy joy, and enables us to await with cheerfulness the coming of the Lord; thirdly, it fortifies us against the violent assaults of Satan. The enemy of mankind never ceases to seek our ruin: and if it be possible to deprive us of all hope of mercy, he more than ever increases his efforts when he sees us approach our last end. This Sacrament, therefore, enables the recipient to fight resolutely and successfully against him; fourthly, it effects the recovery of health, if advantageous to the sick person.”[44]

Why does God not always heal physical ailments? God cares for both the body and the soul, but the health of the soul has priority. In his letter to the Corinthians Saint Paul says, “a thorn was given me in the flesh”[45] We do not know whether Saint Paul had a physical ailment or if the thorn meant something else. Saint Paul has numerous physical sufferings in his life and it is thought that his eyes failed him toward the end of life. Whether the “torn in his flesh” was spiritual or physical, Saint Paul asked to be healed of it and God denied him the healing. Saint Paul says, “Three times I begged the Lord about this, that it should leave me; but he said to me, ‘My grace is sufficient for

you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.”[46] God always has a plan for our life and physical healing may or may not be in that plan. What is for sure is that God want to perfect our soul and if a physical ailment will help in the perfection of our soul, then God would not take away the physical ailment. Many times we desire healing. Healing is not the answer, God’s grace is the answer, and if God’s grace entails healing, that so be it.

Who can receive this Sacrament? The sacrament is for those faithful (who are baptized and have reached the age of reason) [47] who are in serious illness or old age.[48] It is also fitting for those who may undergo a serious operation to receive the Sacrament.[49]

What is the difference between Anointing of the Sick and Last Rites? Last Rites is really known as “Viaticum”. Viaticum is receiving the Eucharist at the last moment of your life here on earth. While Anointing of the Sick does prepare us for the end of our life, it is not specifically done at the last stages of life. As mentioned earlier, a person who is going into major surgery and has an excellent chance of recovery can still receive the Sacrament of Anointing of the Sick because there are risks and could be complications. The reason for Anointing of the Sick and Viaticum is to prepare us for the end of our earthly life, whether immediately or in the future. “Thus, just as the Sacraments of Baptism, Confirmation, and the Eucharist form a unity called ‘the Sacraments of Christian initiation,’ so too it can be said that Penance, the Anointing of the Sick, and the Eucharist as Viaticum constitute at the end of Christian life ‘the Sacraments that prepare for our heavenly homeland; or the Sacraments that complete the earthly pilgrimage.’[50]

Who can give this Sacrament? Only priests (bishops or presbyters) can administer this Sacrament. “It is the duty of pastors to instruct the faithful on the benefits of this Sacrament. The faithful should encourage the sick to call for a priest to receive this Sacrament. The sick should prepare themselves to receive it with good dispositions, assisted by their pastor and the whole ecclesial community, which is invited to surround the sick in a special way through their prayers and fraternal attention.”[51]

Is this Sacrament necessary? Anointing of the Sick is not necessary for our salvation. However, we should not purposefully neglect any grace that God wishes to give us. God loves us so much that He willed the institution of this Sacrament to heal

and prepare our bodies to be with Him for eternity. The Council of Trent stated, “To despise so great a Sacrament would indeed be a great sin, an insult to the Holy Ghost.”[52] Yet, if someone dies before a priest is able to give them this Sacrament, they are not in danger of hell simply because they did not receive Anointing of the Sick.

Can we receive this Sacrament more than once? Yes, the Church teaches that we can receive this Sacrament as often as we are in danger of death or our health gets worse. “...but we must bear in mind that we can be anointed only once in the same sickness.”[53]

What are other names for this Sacrament? Besides Anointing of the Sick, this Sacrament also goes by Anointing of Unction and/or Extreme Unction.

Why is this Sacrament sometimes called Extreme Unction? “Because among all the Sacraments which our Lord and Savior ordained in His Church, this one is the last we are to receive. But from this it does not follow, as so many believe that one who receives this Sacrament must die soon, but it will rather become a means of salvation for their souls, and if it be for their eternal welfare, will also restore their bodily health.”[54]

What is the process of Anointing of the Sick? Following the Second Vatican Council, Pope Paul VI along with the Apostolic Constitution, Sacram Unctionem Infirmorum, solidified the Roman Rite of the Sacrament. “The Sacrament of Anointing of the Sick is given to those who are seriously ill by anointing them on the forehead and hands with duly blessed oil – pressed from olives or from other plants – saying, only once: ‘Through this holy anointing may the Lord in His love and mercy help you with the grace of the Holy Spirit. May the Lord who frees you from sin save you and raise you up.’”[55] The Eastern Church may anoint several other places on the body as a way to remedy what may have caused them to sin.

Natural Law – Lesson and Discussion
“The one who treated him with mercy.”

What is law? “Law is a rule of conduct enacted by competent authority for the sake of the common good.”[56] All law “hinges upon the desire for God and submission to Him who is the source of all that is good.”[57]