

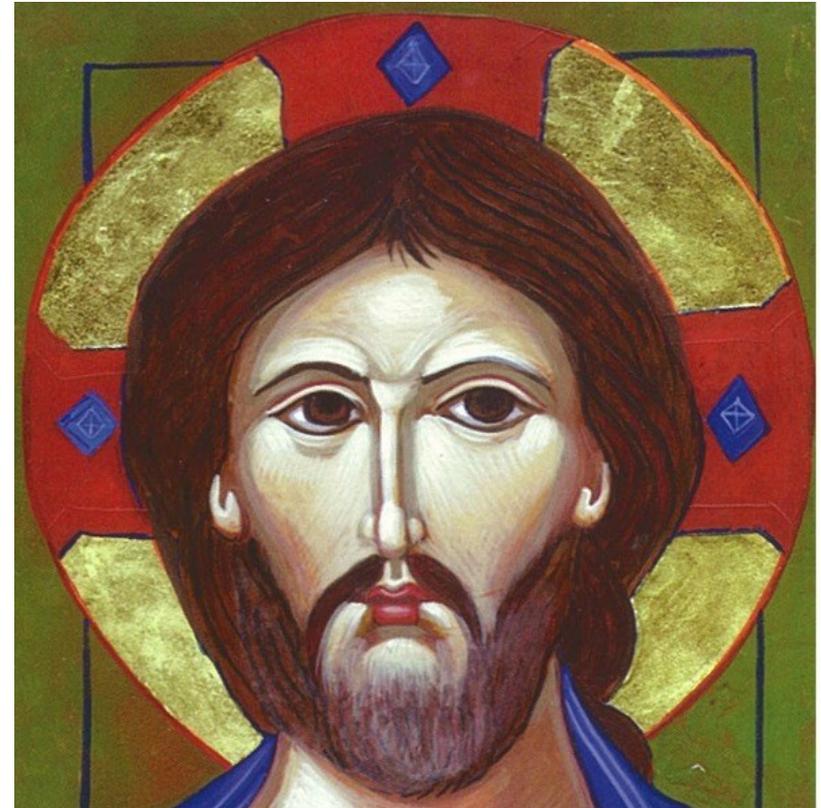
- [7] Catholiconline.com
- [8] Genesis 1:4
- [9] New Saint Joseph Sunday Missal and Hymnal, page 1276
- [10] Communion Antiphon in this Link to Liturgy
- [11] Psalm 73:25
- [12] We must hate sin above all other evils, so as to be resolved never to commit a willful sin, for the love or fear of anything whatsoever (Catechism of Christian Doctrine; The Penny Catechism; section 335).
- [13] Spiritual Reading in this Link to Liturgy
- [14] John 4: 31-34 (The Samaritan Woman at the well)
- [15] Saint Teresa of Avila, Way, 12
- [16] The Morning Offering: O Jesus through the Immaculate Heart of Mary I offer you my prayers, works, joys, sufferings of this day in union with the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass throughout the world.
- [17] Divine Intimacy; Father Gabriel of Saint Mary Magdalen, O.C.D.; section 81
- [18] Catechism of Christian Doctrine; The Penny Catechism; section 361
- [19] John 2: 5 (Wedding at Cana)
- [20] Divine Intimacy; Father Gabriel of Saint Mary Magdalen, O.C.D.; section 81
- [21] Matthew 19:22 (The Rich Young Ruler)
- [22] Father Francis Fernandez; In Conversation with God; Vol. 3, section 64.3
- [23] Catechism of the Catholic Church; section 459
- [24] John 16: 8 (Last Supper Discourse)
- [25] Divine Intimacy; Father Gabriel of Saint Mary Magdalen, O.C.D.; section 81
- [26] Father Francis Fernandez; In Conversation with God; Vol. 4, section 93.2
- [27] Father Francis Fernandez; In Conversation with God; Vol. 4, section 93.2 (Saint John Climacus, The Ladder to Paradise)
- [28] Saint Merinard Prayer Book; page 155
- [29] Father Francis Fernandez; In Conversation with God; Vol. 3, section 64.3

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Link to Liturgy



23rd Sunday of Ordinary Time Discipleship

Lessons and Discussions

Page 4 – Is it a “good” or a “god”

“if anyone comes to me without turning his back”

Page 7 – Detachment is the first of four steps

“if he does not renounce all his possessions.”

Page 11 – Counting the cost of discipleship

“will he not first sit down and calculate”...spitting, touched his tongue”

Communion Antiphon – Daily Roman Missal

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

Iustus es, Domine *Ps 119 (118): 137, 124*

YOU are righteous, O Lord, * and right is your
judg-ment; deal with this servant of yours according to
your mer-cy.

Collect – Daily Roman Missal

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

O God, by whom we are redeemed and receive adoption,
look graciously upon your beloved sons and daughters,
that those who believe in Christ
may receive true freedom
and an everlasting inheritance.
Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, for ever and ever.

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

Gospel Reading – Luke 14: 25-33 – Daily Roman Missal

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

On one occasion when a great crowd was with Jesus,
he turned to them and said, “If anyone comes to me
without turning his back on his father and mother, his
wife and his children, his brothers and sisters, indeed

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 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] Responsory in the Link to Liturgy packet
- [2] Matthew 19:17 (The Rich Young Ruler)
- [3] Catechism of the Catholic Church; Glossary
- [4] Venerable Pope John Paul II the Great; Veritatis Splendor, 11.1
- [5] Question 126; Baltimore Catechism No. 3
- [6] Gospel Reading in this Link to Liturgy

self-seeking and ease, promoted very often by the advertisements of the consumer society?

Am I sparing in my personal needs, do I put curbs on my extravagance, do I avoid frivolous and unnecessary purchases?

Sometimes we can create false 'necessities' which we could well forgo if we wanted to, if we were determined to do our best not to give in to the whims and caprices which so easily solicit our greed.

Do I really look after the material things of my home and the implements and goods I use?

Have I the clear realization that I am only a steward over these things, and will one day have to give an account of them to their true owner, God our Lord?

Do I cheerfully accept whatever inconveniences me and the lack of means at my disposal?

Am I generous in giving alms to those who are in much worse circumstances?

Do I contribute to the support of good causes, depriving myself of thing I would like to have...?

Marian Antiphon – Divine Office (Sunday Compline)

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 clamá-mus, éx-su-les, fí-li-i He-væ Ad te suspi-rá-mus,
gemén-tes et flentes in hac lacrimá-rum valle. E-ia ergo, Advocá-ta
nostra, il-los tu-os mi-se-ri-córdes ó-cu-los ad nos convér-te. Et Je-sum,
bene-díctum fructum ventris tu-i, nobis post hoc exsú-li-um osténde.
O clemens : O pi-a : O dulcis * Virgo Ma-rí-a.

his very self, he cannot be my follower. Anyone who does not take up his cross and follow me cannot be my disciple. If one of you decides to build a tower, will he not first sit down and calculate the outlay to see if he has enough money to complete the project? He will do that for fear of laying the foundation and then no being able to complete the work; at which all who saw it would then jeer at him, saying, 'That man began to build what he could not finish.' "Or if a king is about to march on another king to do battle with him, will he not sit down first and consider whether, with ten thousand men, he can withstand an enemy coming against him with twenty thousand? If he cannot he will send a delegation while the enemy is still at a distance, asking for terms of peace. In the same way, none of you can be my disciple if he does not renounce all his possessions."

The Gospel of the Lord.

- Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ

Spiritual Reading

From a sermon on the beatitudes by Saint Leo the Great, pope
The Lord then goes on to say: Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be filled. This hunger is not for any bodily food, this thirst is not for any earthly drink: it is a longing to be blessed with righteousness, and, by penetrating the secret of all mysteries, to be filled with the Lord himself. Happy is the soul that longs for the food of righteousness and thirsts for this kind of drink; it would not seek such things if it had not already savored their delight. When the soul hears the voice of the Spirit saying to it through the prophet: Taste and see that the Lord is good, it has already received a portion of God's goodness, and is on fire with love, the love that gives joy of the utmost purity. It counts as nothing all that belongs to time; it is entirely consumed with desire to eat and drink the food of righteousness.

Responsory - Office of Readings - Psalm 31:20; 1 Corinthians 2:9

O Lord, how great is the goodness you have stored up for those who fear you.

- This goodness you lavish on all who hope in you

No eye has seen, no ear heard, nor has the heart of man conceived.

- This goodness you lavish on all who hope in you

Is it a “good” or a “god”– Lesson and Discussion

“If anyone comes to me without turning his back”

“How great is the goodness you have stored up for those who fear you, this goodness you lavish on all who hope in you.”[1] Who does not want to have goodness lavished on them? We want what is good, so much so that sometimes we forget that God is the source of goodness. Jesus says to the rich young ruler, “There is only One who is good.”[2] In the Ten Commandments, the first three commandments deal with love of God (Have no other God, do not take God’s name in vain and keep holy the Sabbath). The last seven commandments deal with love of neighbor (Honor your mother and father, Do not kill, etc.). When Jesus tells the rich young ruler to obey the commandments, the rich young ruler says, “Which ones?” Jesus begins with the fifth commandment and makes no mention of the first through third commandment. Why? The rich young ruler has fulfilled 4-10, he has loved his neighbor, but he has failed at loving God. He knows how to do “good” yet he does not know the One who is “good”.

Prudence is the virtue which disposes a person to discern the good and choose the correct means to accomplish it.[3]

Many times in life we are not presented with “good” vs. “bad” but instead, we are presented with two “goods”. In the case of two goods, prudence helps us to choose the greater good. A good thing can distract us from greater thing. The rich young ruler, held onto the goodness of the “law” but did not know or experience the giver of the law, who desires to lavish goodness upon those who hope in Him. In elementary school we learned a very simple grammar lesson: Good, Better, Best. There is a chant that goes, “Good, Better, Best, never let it rest until your Good is your Better and your Better is your best.” Jesus was teaching the rich young ruler this lesson, to live out the law, GOOD; to know and love the law giver; BEST. “The statement that, ‘There is only one who is good’ thus brings us back to the first tablet of the commandments, which calls us to acknowledge God as the one Lord of all and to worship him

As the tower builder and the king in today’s Gospel we examine our conscience. “In order to strike a balance at the end of the day, it will prove a great help to have fostered a spirit of examination throughout the day, like the good banker who daily, towards evening, determines his debits and credits. But this cannot be done in detail unless he is continually recording his transactions. A glance at his ledger shows the situation for that whole day” [27]

An examination of conscience can take many forms- from a brief look over the day before retiring at night, to a more personal review of life in preparation for the Sacrament of Reconciliation, to a complete personal inventory. Whatever our situation or circumstance, we are called to accountability. As members of the Body of Christ, we have responsibilities and obligations to our God, to one another, to the Community of Faith, and to our personal integrity. Through human weakness, we are not always faithful to our responsibilities and obligations. Through sin, we create division among the Body of Christ. Sin involves attitudes as well as acts – single occasions, isolated incidents, habitual events and recurring episodes. So we step back and reflect. We entrust ourselves to the mercy of God and open ourselves to the transforming power of God’s grace. [28]

The Ignatian steps of Examination are a good place to begin. Saint Ignatius of Loyola proposes five steps in an Examination.

1. Recall you are in the presence of God.
2. Give thanks to God for the favors received.
3. Ask for awareness of the Holy Spirit’s aid.
4. Examine how you are living this day.
5. Pray words of reconciliation and resolve (Act of Contrition).

The series of questions below taken from “In Conversation with God”[29] fit with the theme of detachment from the world, the call to deny oneself, pick up the Cross and follow Christ as a disciple.

What is the true motivation of my actions?

What is my heart really set upon?

Have I really tried to be detached from earthly goods, or on the contrary, do I suffer and complain when I am short of something I could be doing without?

How quick am I to react against the slightest incitement to

pure of heart they shall see God”

Obedience – “humbled himself and became obedient even unto death”

Sober - “Be sober and alert, your adversary the devil prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour.”

Selfless - “Deny yourself”

Truthful- “I am the way the truth and the life” “The truth will set you free” “Do not bear false witness”

Reflect and discuss one to two ways each of these demands can be exercised in our life.

Profession of Faith or Popular Devotion – Examination of Conscience

There are many examinations of conscience, the important aspect of a good examination is that the soul converses with God and that the Holy Spirit is able to “convict the world in regard to sin and righteousness and condemnation.”[24]

“If you wish to start resolutely on the road of total detachment – the only sure road to divine union – you must ‘put the axe to the root of the tree’; that is, you must break off and pull up the root of your attachments – that inordinate tendency to enjoy, or to seek satisfaction in yourself, in your pride, or in other creatures. It is true that you were created to enjoy, but to enjoy God.[25] There are imperfections and weakness rooted in our souls and it is through daily examination of conscience that the Holy Spirit puts the axe to the roots. Getting hit by the axe of the Spirit is not easy or fun. “Self-knowledge is not easy, and we need to be on guard against the mute devil. He will try to close the door on the truth in order that we may not see the imperfections and weaknesses that are rooted in our souls. He will tend to have us excuse in ourselves those lacks of love of God which are our sins and imperfections, and to encourage us to regard them as though they were details of little importance or simply due to external circumstances.”[26] Saint John Vianny said in regards to sin “We will either accuse ourselves or excuse ourselves.”

alone for his infinite holiness (Ex 20:2-11). The good is belonging to God, obeying him, walking humbly with him in doing justice and in loving kindness (Mic. 6:8). Acknowledging the Lord as God is the very core, the heart of the Law, from which the particular precepts flow and toward which they are ordered.”[4]

What is our “end”, the ultimate “good”? By the “end of man” we mean the purpose for which he was created; namely, to know, love, and serve God.[5]

What is better to know, love or serve God? The first tablet of the law (commandments 1-3) deals with knowing and loving God, the second tablet of the law (commandments 4-10) deals with serving. Serving is good, knowing and loving God is better. Knowing, loving and serving is what we were created for, it is the best because it is our end.

The rich young ruler loved the “law” more than the “lawgiver” and many times we do the same, we follow the commands of God, but do not “belong to God”. In today’s Gospel, Jesus gives us another lesson in Good, Better and Best. Jesus is acknowledging that family, friends and self are GOOD. What is BEST, what is BETTER? Jesus tells us, we must “renounce all our possessions”[6], take up our cross and follow Him.

Jesus knows that “father, mother, wife, children, brothers, sisters and self” are GOOD and He is acknowledging and teaching us that they are so GOOD, that we often are not willing to “turn our back” on the GOOD for the BEST. We settle for good, when we could have the best.

What is the greatest good(s) in our life? What does turning our back on “father and mother”, “wife and children” etc. mean? We usually think of friends and family and then our activities, interests, etc. Jesus points to some of the greatest goods in life “father and mother”, “wife and children”, “brothers and sisters” and “self”. How easy it can become to make “gods” out of our families, parents, children and out of our self. Making each of these groups into “gods” and putting them in the place of God happens very easily. A “father and mother” imitate the Holy Trinity in that they bring forth life, nurture life, provide for needs, educate, direct and support. It can be very tempting to rely more on our earthly parents and the temporal satisfaction and security they give. In some cases we may even

think that there is no need for an eternal Father if I have a temporal father. Our parents can take the place of God. A family “wife and children” imitate the Holy Trinity in that family life is a community of sharing each others life including joys and sorrows. It is a community that sacrifices and supports. It can be tempting to wrap ourselves and identify ourselves solely based on our domestic family that we forget the family of God the Church or even worst forget our relationship with the Blessed Trinity. Our biological brothers and sisters and the groups that we belong to such band, teams, fraternities, sororities, organizations, gangs, etc become brotherhoods and sisterhoods. Our devotion and dedication to these groups can become more religious than our religion. We can spend more time and energy working for the groups than we do for God and we communicate more with the groups than we do with God. When things go bad, why do I need God, I have my “brothers and sisters”. And there is our self, the unholy Trinity “Me, Myself and I”. Why do I need God, when I can do everything on my own? I provide my own needs and I follow my own will. Jesus is telling us very clearly that all of these things are “good”! It is because they are so good that He warns us and says that we must “turn our back on them” or we “cannot be His follower”. He knows that it is tempting to replace the one true good “God” with the lesser goods of parents, family, friends, groups and self.

The martyrdom of Saint Perpetua gives us an example of how a young woman turned her back on her own father, her infant son and her own life to follow Christ. In the year 203, Saint Perpetua made the decision to become a Christian, although she knew it could mean her death during Septimus' persecution. Her father was frantic with worry and tried to talk her out of her decision. We can easily understand his concern. At 22 years old, this well-educated, high-spirited woman had every reason to want to live -- including a baby son who was still nursing. We know she was married, but since her husband is never mentioned, many historians assume she was a widow. Perpetua's answer was simple and clear. Pointing to a water jug, she asked her father, "See that pot lying there? Can you call it by any other name than what it is?" Her father answered, "Of course not." Perpetua responded, "Neither can I call myself by any other name than what I am -- a Christian." This answer so upset her father that he attacked her. Perpetua reports that after that incident she was glad to be separated from him for a few days -- even though that separation was

Daily Exercise which says, “As to my eating, drinking, sleeping, and amusements, I should use all these things with moderation, and with a desire to please God.”[18] As we experience a detachment from the things of the world, we begin to care more about what brings God pleasure rather than what bring us pleasure.

Counting the cost of discipleship – Lesson and Discussion

“will he not first sit down and calculate”

Jesus is our example, He has paved the way. God the Father commands us “Listen to Him”. The Blessed Virgin Mary, Our Mother commands us at the Wedding at Cana “Do whatever he tells you.”[19] He is the perfect model. As the tower builder and the king in today’s Gospel, we count the costs of following Christ. Of course we count the cost of following Him, but we must not count the cost of what will happen if we do not follow Him. The rich young ruler calculated the costs. “There is only one choice: to live for self or to live for God.”[20] The rich young ruler’s choice was to live for self, the result: “he went away sad”[21] The result will be the same for us if we chose to live for self. “Our highest ideal is to follow Christ closely. We don’t want to go away as the young man did, his soul filled with sadness because he was unable to renounce some possessions of little worth in exchange for the immense riches of Jesus Christ.”[22]

“The Word became flesh to be our model of holiness: ‘Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me’ ‘I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father, but by me.’ On the mountain of the Transfiguration, the Father commands: ‘Listen to him!’ Jesus is the model for the Beatitudes and the norm of the new law: ‘Love one another as I have loved you.’ This love implies an effective offering of oneself, after his example.”[23]

When we look at Christ, our model of holiness, we can count the COST by looking at the virtues in His life that helped Him to renounce His possessions, deny Himself, pick up His Cross, do the will of the Father until the work was finished. The reward for Christ is a reward that He promises and shares with all disciples, the resurrection and life eternal.

The C.O.S.T.ly demands of discipleship

Chaste – “Blessed are the

when she was ready for bed, he would stop whatever he was doing and come upstairs to read her a story. One night when he finished the story, he asked Jenny, "Do you love me?" "Oh yes, Daddy. You know that I love you." "Then give me your pearls." "Oh, Daddy, not my pearls. But you can have Princess—the white horse from my collection. The one with the pink tail. Remember, Daddy? The one you gave me. She's my favorite." "That's okay, Honey. Daddy loves you. Good night." And he brushed her cheek with a kiss. About a week later, after the story time, Jenny's daddy asked again, "Do you love me?" "Daddy, you know I love you." "Then give me your pearls." "Oh Daddy, not my pearls. But you can have my babydoll. The brand new one I got for my birthday. She is so beautiful and you can have the yellow blanket that matches her sleeper." "That's okay. Sleep well. God bless you, little one. Daddy loves you." And as always, he brushed her cheek with a gentle kiss. A few nights later when her daddy came in, Jenny was sitting on her bed with her legs crossed Indian-style. As he came close, he noticed her chin was trembling and one silent tear rolled down her cheek. "What is it, Jenny? What's the matter?" Jenny didn't say anything but lifted her little hand up to her daddy. And when she opened it, there was her little pearl necklace. With a little quiver, she finally said, "Here, Daddy. It's for you." With tears gathering in his own eyes, Jenny's kind daddy reached out with one hand to take the dime-store necklace, and with the other hand he reached into his pocket and pulled out a blue velvet case with a strand of genuine pearls and gave them to Jenny. He had them all the time. He was just waiting for her to give up the dime-store stuff so he could give her genuine treasure.

How do we empty our self, How do we detach?

We have to trust. We need to look at the pattern that Jesus has set before us, the train that Saint Teresa's suggests. We don't look at the whole train but look at what we must do first. We renounce our possessions, our inordinate desire for pleasure so that we can walk the way of Christ and we empty our self, so that we will be slowly filled in this life and in the next. We should look at what brings us pleasure, what do we delight in. The "inordinate desire for pleasure is the thing which turns your desires and affections toward creatures, instead of fixing them on God." [17] In other words if we care more about pleasing others or our self more than pleasing God, we are not empty, we are not detached. A good rule to use is found in The Christian's

the result of her arrest and imprisonment.[7]

Should we avoid the "goods" of the world? No! God created the world and said, "it is good"[8]. We must view earthy goods for that which they are "goods" not "gods". If we are afraid of earthy goods and begin to feel that they are evil and we consume our self with avoiding them, we have put too much emphasis on them and in being overly concerned about avoiding them they pull our site off of God. For example a beer, is a beer. Beer is an earthy good. A drunkard focuses so much on the beer, and needs the beer, thus he makes the "good" into a "god". A puritan focuses so much on the beer, saying that it is evil and to be avoided and lets everyone know how bad it is. Similar to the drunk, the puritan through his preoccupation and focus on what is simply an earthy good has made the "good" into a "god" We see earthy goods for what they are, simply a "good" not a "god". Things are only "good" in that they lead us or in the least do not distract us from the true "good" which is God Himself. On the road to heaven there are many "goods" on the side of the road. These "goods" are to be signs that continue to point us in the direction of the end, the ultimate good. If we focus too much on the "good" either through the obsession on wanting it or in preoccupation of avoiding it, we hesitate on our journey toward heaven toward the good.

Detachment is the first of four steps – Lesson and Discussion

"if he does not renounce all his possessions."

"Turning his back on his father and mother" (in other translation, "hating") is a Semitic way of saying "giving his father and mother second place in affection"; Matthew's version has: "He who loves father or mother more than me..." Jesus requires detachment from family ties and the willingness to carry a cross.[9] It is only possible to detach from family, self and the good of the world if we have the thirst the desire for God as our first place. "Like a deer that longs for running streams, my soul longs for you, my God. My soul is thirsting for the living God." [10] "Whom else have I in the heavens? None beside you delight me on earth." [11] This does not mean that we can not have delight in the things of the earth, such as food, music, friendships, etc. It is when we love an earthly good or fear an earthly good more than we love or fear God that we fall into sin.[12] If we begin to love or fear earthly goods more than

God, then we have allowed earthly goods to bring us a delight that is limited, a delight that is only temporal. We have chosen to lavish upon ourselves goods which we can obtain for our self and in the process of denied goods which God wants to lavish upon us.

“Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be filled. This hunger is not for any bodily food, this thirst is not for any earthly drink: it is a longing to be blessed with righteousness, and, by penetrating the secret of all mysteries, to be filled with the Lord himself... It counts as nothing all that belongs to time; it is entirely consumed with desire to eat and drink the food of righteousness.”[13]

What do we hunger and thirst for? Everyone has hunger and thirst. We can hunger and thirst for “bodily food” and “earthly drink”, the things that “belongs to time” or we can learn to hunger and thirst for righteousness, to be in union with God. What kind of hunger did Jesus have? “Meanwhile the disciples urged him, ‘Rabbi, eat.’ But he said to them, ‘I have food to eat of which you do not know.’ So the disciples said to one another, ‘Could someone have brought him something to eat?’ Jesus said to them, ‘My food is to do the will of the one who sent me and to finish his work.’”[14] It is true that we like the disciples, do not know this “food”. We do not yet have the desire to eat and drink the will of the Father, the work of the Father; it is this will, this work that is a hunger and thirst for the eternal, not the temporal, a hunger and thirst for righteousness.

As humans we hold onto what we have and are not ready to give up our hunger and thirst for one thing unless we have tasted something else that is better. Christ is telling us to give up our hunger and thirst of the world, which is all we know. He expects us to give up the world without yet fully tasting heaven. He expects us to trust Him, when He promises us that the eternal is better than the temporal, that heaven is better than the world, that the will of the Father is better than our will. The first step to righteousness is to renounce our possessions, to detach ourselves from the things of the world. When we fast from the temporal, we begin to have a hunger and thirst for the eternal, for righteousness.

Analogy - The Train

“But how harsh it sounds to say that we must take pleasure in

nothing, unless we also speak of the consolations and delights that this renunciation brings in its train. Oh, what a great gain it is, even in this life.”[15] Saint Teresa of Avila asks us to think of a train. In the analogy of the train below there are five carts, the first four carts are the steps toward having a hunger and thirst for righteousness and the last cart, the fifth is the cart which only God can fill, the last cart represents the soul, completely empty of self and of the word and waiting to be filled by God alone.

The first cart in the train is to renounce our possessions (unless you turn your back on mother, father, sister, brother). The second cart is to deny our self (turn back on self). The third is to pick up our cross (follow him in prayers, works, joys and sufferings[16]), The fourth to hunger and thirst for righteousness (to do the will of the Father and to finish His Work). The last cart is the promise of Christ given in the beatitude “they shall be filled”. Filled with what? The promise of Psalm 31 which is the goodness “the goodness you have stored up for those that fear you”, that of which Saint Paul says, “No eye has seen, no ear heard, nor has the heart of man conceived.”

Story - The Pearl Necklace

The cheerful girl with bouncy golden curls was almost five. Waiting with her mother at the checkout stand, she saw them: a circle of glistening white pearls in a pink foil box. "Oh please, Mommy. Can I have them? Please, Mommy, please!" Quickly the mother checked the back of the little foil box and then looked back into the pleading blue eyes of her little girl's upturned face. "A dollar ninety-five. That's almost \$2.00. If you really want them, I'll think of some extra chores for you and in no time you can save enough money to buy them for yourself. Your birthday's only a week away and you might get another crisp dollar bill from Grandma." As soon as Jenny got home, she emptied her penny bank and counted out 17 pennies. After dinner, she did more than her share of chores and she went to the neighbor and asked Mrs. McJames if she could pick dandelions for ten cents. On her birthday, Grandma did give her another new dollar bill and at last she had enough money to buy the necklace. Jenny loved her pearls. They made her feel dressed up and grown up. She wore them everywhere--Sunday school, kindergarten, even to bed. The only time she took them off was when she went swimming or had a bubble bath. Mother said if they got wet, they might turn her neck green. Jenny had a very loving daddy and every night