

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

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

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

**4. Contemplate** — Be quiet before the Lord enjoying His presence.  
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**How is God calling you to act in response to what he has shown you?**

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Link to Liturgy**



# Quick Connect

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## **Gospel Reading – Luke 14: 25-33 – Roman Missal**

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 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.”

## **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.

## **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.”[1] 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.”[2] “Whom else have I in the heavens? None beside you delight me on earth.”[3] 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.[4] 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.”[5]

**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.’”[6] 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.”[7] 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[8]), 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.”

### **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.”[9] 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 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.”[10] 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.

### **“The End” Notes**

[1] New Saint Joseph Sunday Missal and Hymnal, page 1276

[2] Communion Antiphon in this Link to Liturgy

[3] Psalm 73:25

[4] 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).

[5] Spiritual Reading in this Link to Liturgy

[6] John 4: 31-34 (The Samaritan Woman at the well)

[7] Saint Teresa of Avila, Way, 12

[8] 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.

[9] Divine Intimacy; Father Gabriel of Saint Mary Magdalen, O.C.D.; section 81

[10] Catechism of Christian Doctrine; The Penny Catechism; section 361