

Our Greatest Need: Lent Message Series 2021

Study Guide Week #1 (February 20/21)

Series Summary: What do we really need? We are not entirely self-sufficient, but we have needs that go beyond our ability to satisfy. To grow in relationship with God and others requires that we accept the reality of those needs and that we surrender to God to meet those needs well.

Weekly Focus: In this first week, we will introduce the topic of having needs. We will lay out the ways in which we are tempted to use our needs in the wrong way. Knowing our needs and taking the time to meet them is not selfish. It is living in the reality that we are children of God. He made us needy, so that we will eventually come to understand our greatest need is for Him.

Praying with the Sunday Gospel: Read together the Sunday Gospel (Mark 1:12-15) and share any words or phrases that stick out to you.

Individual Reflection or Discussion Questions:

1. What challenges you about Fr. Gary's message this week and why?
2. What is your definition of "need"?
3. Fr. Gary mentioned, *"The best way to lead people is to lead yourself physically, emotionally, relationally, and spiritually."* Do you believe this? Do you take time for yourself and "self-care"?
4. In the Gospel this weekend we hear: "The Spirit drove Jesus out into the desert, and he remained in the desert for forty days, tempted by Satan." Fr. Gary mentioned 4 temptations we face when it comes to our needs:
 - o 1st Temptation- Deny a legitimate need and act like it's not needed.
 - o 2nd Temptation- To meet them in an illegitimate way.
 - o 3rd Temptation- Shadow needs, to settle for what is a shadow of the real and legitimate need.
 - o 4th Temptation- To turn our needs into gods.
 - o *Which of these challenges you the most? Which of these is not as tempting for you?*
5. What is your greatest need today?

Closing Prayer: Take time as a small group to read through the words of the song "Lord I Need You" by Matt Maher or have someone play on their device. Then pray together spontaneously for the needs of your group.

Lord I come, I confess...Bowling here, I find my rest. Without You, I fall apart.
You're the one that guides my heart Lord, I need You, oh I need You. Every
hour, I need You. My one defense, my righteousness....Oh God, how I need
You. Where sin runs deep, Your grace is more. Where grace is found is where
You are And where You are, Lord I am free
Holiness is Christ in me

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Study Guide Week #2 (February 27/28)

The Need for Prayer

Weekly Focus: Our greatest need - above all our other needs - is for a relationship with God. We have a God-shaped hole in our heart that nothing else will fill. In this week, we will explore why we often wander from this relationship with God. We will use the story of Abraham and discuss how eventually he was willing to sacrifice everything because of his faith and trust in God. This is where God wants to lead us. God wants to meet all our needs, and more than anything else, wants us to recognize that He has provided himself as a sacrifice for us.

Praying with the Sunday Gospel: Read together the 1st Reading (Genesis 22:1-2, 9a, 10-13, 15-18). How does this reading speak to your life today?

Individual Reflection or Discussion Questions:

1. What challenges you about Fr. Gary's message this week and why?
2. Have you ever thought about Abraham being an example of trust and faith? What have you had to "sacrifice" in your relationship with God?
3. At St. Elizabeth's the 1st Characteristic of Disciple is Prayer. How would you define prayer?
4. In the book "I Heard God Laugh", the author says that "when God invites us to trust in Him, He promises that everything will work out in the end, but he doesn't promise that everything will work out the way we want it to."
 - o Is there a time you have seen that happen in your life? Share with the group.
 - o It has been said that God answers prayers in 3 ways: 1) Yes, 2) Not yet 3) I have something better for you. How do you interpret that thought?
5. What have you used in prayer to grow in your relationship with God?
6. What is your greatest need in prayer right now?

Closing Prayer: Take time as a small group to read through the words of the song "Lord I Need You" by Matt Maher or have someone play on their device. Then pray together spontaneously for any needs your group would like to pray about.

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Bowing here, I find my rest
Without You, I fall apart
You're the one that guides my heart. Lord, I need You, oh I need You
Every hour, I need You
My one defense, my righteousness
Oh God, how I need You

Where sin runs deep, Your grace is more
Where grace is found is where You are
And where You are, Lord I am free
Holiness is Christ in me.

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Study Guide Week #3 (March 6/7)

The Need for Work for Rest

Weekly Focus: In the 10 Commandments, God gives us clear instructions on how-to live-in relationship with him and live-in relationship with others. In the 3rd Commandment, he instructs us to rest. This week we will look at both our need for work and our need for rest.

Praying with the Sunday Gospel: Read together the 1st Reading together (Exodus 17:3-7). How does this reading speak to your life today?

Individual Reflection or Discussion Questions:

1. What challenges you about Fr. Gary's message this week and why?
2. What does it mean to you to "keep holy the Sabbath Day"? How do you do that?
3. How do you view work? Review the 3 different ways that Fr. Gary points out and share which one resonates with you: 1) One way to see work is as a job. 2) To look at work as a career and/or 3) To look at work as a vocation.
4. How do you view rest?
5. When was the last time you experienced "soul satisfying" rest?
6. What can you do this week to balance your "work" and your "rest"?

Closing Prayer: Take time as a small group to read through the words of the song "Lord I Need You" by Matt Maher or have someone play on their device. Then pray together spontaneously for any needs your group would like to pray about.

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Bowing here, I find my rest
Without You, I fall apart
You're the one that guides my heart

Lord, I need You, oh I need You
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My one defense, my righteousness
Oh God, how I need You

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Holiness is Christ in me

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Study Guide Week #4 (March 13/14)
The Need for Healing

Weekly Focus: This week we focus on our need for healing. We need healing because of the hurts and wounds inflicted upon us by other people. We need healing because of our own choices and decisions that have hurt and wounded others and for those choices and decisions that have led to self-inflicted pain. We need Jesus to save us.

Praying with the Sunday Gospel: Read together John 3:14-21. Share any words or phrases that stay with you from this reading.

Individual Reflection or Discussion Questions:

1. What challenges you about Deacon Frank's message this week and why?
2. When you think of healing what comes to mind?
3. *Anointing of the Sick and Reconciliation* are known as "Sacraments of Healing". How have you experienced these sacraments in your own life or the lives of those who are close to you?
4. How has the Lord healed you?
5. In what areas of your life do you need the Lord's healing today?

Closing Prayer: Reread John 3:16 each taking a turn putting your name in the place of world.

For God so loved __*(Name)*__ that he gave his only Son, so that
__*(Name)*__ would not perish but might have eternal life.

Do you believe this? Pray together as a group for a better knowledge of this in your life and the ability to allow the Lord to heal you of whatever stands in your way of being fully available to God. Conclude this time with a "Glory Be" together.

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Study Guide Week #5 (March 20/21)

The Need to Live for God

Weekly Focus: In the Gospel, Jesus says that unless a grain of wheat falls to the ground and dies, it remains just a grain of wheat. He uses that as an explanation for his own crucifixion that he knows is inevitable. In this message we will look at our need to die to ourselves and need to sacrifice to gain the life God wants to give us.

Praying with the Sunday Gospel: Read the Sunday gospel (John 12:20-33) as a small group and discuss any word or phrase that stays with you. Why?

Individual Reflection or Discussion Questions:

1. What challenges you about Fr. Gary's message this week and why?
2. What is your view of death?
3. How has Lent helped you to be less selfish and live for God?
4. What are you wrestling to surrender and lay down to God, or perhaps, where are you struggling?
5. Where is God calling you to die to yourself, so that a better version of you can come to life?
6. What have learned during this message and this Lent that is going to make you live for God differently?

Closing Prayer: Take time as a small group to read through the words of the song "Lord I Need You" by Matt Maher or have someone play on their device. Then pray together spontaneously for any needs your group would like to pray about.

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