

## Parable of the Sower

Mt 13-1-23

growth in our spiritual life

Questions for Discussion:

1. What is contributing to the growth of your spiritual life right now? Be as specific as you can.
2. What is the main obstacle to your spiritual life right now? Again, try to be specific.
3. Going back to the parable of the soil, the soil being our own lives, who is responsible for keeping it rich and fertile? Who is responsible for your own spiritual growth? Are you fulfilling your responsibility to keep the soil of your own spiritual life rich? If not, what can you do to make it more fertile? Have our MM Formation Resources helped?
4. Do you have a responsibility as a husband and father for the spiritual life of your family? Do you take it seriously? If not, why not? Do you ever discuss with your wife your mutual responsibility for the spiritual growth of your children?

## Parable of Pharisee and Tax Collector

Lk 18-9-14

different ways of praying

Questions for Discussion:

1. What is the one thing which most puzzles you about prayer? What do you find hardest to accept about prayer?
2. When you pray, what thoughts most often break in? Do they spring from the prayer, or do they pull you away from the prayer?
3. Have you ever felt afraid to pray? Is there something you're afraid of, or afraid to ask? Why?
4. What have you prayed for that, when you look back on it, you're glad you didn't get? Or prayed that it would not happen, but you're glad it did? How would your life be different if God had granted those prayers?
5. Do you get embarrassed when praying aloud in the presence of others? Do you pray for different things when praying with them than in private?
6. Since God knows all about you and what he is going to do before you ask, what do you think might be some reasons God still wants you to pray to Him? What do you expect from prayer?
7. What is your favorite type of prayer? Is there any specific position that you like to pray to take during prayer (standing up, sitting down, kneeling, or bowing down, laying down)?

## Parable of Good Samaritan

Lk 10: 25-37

reaching out to our neighbor

Questions for Discussion:

1. What are the challenges we face to love both God and neighbor and how can we strive to overcome them?
2. Who are our neighbors? As parents and grandparents, how can we teach our children and grandchildren to be more aware of the need to support others no matter who they are?
3. Have there been situations in your life when you chose not to help someone? What were your reasons for not getting involved?
4. Has anyone been a "Good Samaritan" to you or your family? What was it like to feel their support and what did you learn from them? Do you live your life any differently today because of this experience?
5. How can we help others understand the lesson our Lord is teaching us in this parable? What is your plan to share today's message with family and friends?

"Do ordinary things with extraordinary Love. Let us love one another as God loves each one of us. And where does this love begin? In our own home. How does it begin? By praying together. God told us, 'love your neighbor as yourself'."

Blessed Mother Teresa

## Parable of the Workers in the Vineyard

Mt 20: 1-16

God's word of encouragement

Questions for Discussion:

"To pray, I think, does not mean to think about God in contrast to thinking about other things, or to spend time with God instead of spending time with other people. Rather, it means to think and live in the presence of God. As soon as we begin to divide our thoughts about God and thoughts about people and events, we remove God from our daily life and put him in a pious little niche where we can think pious thoughts and experience pious feelings. Although it is important and even indispensable for the spiritual life to set apart time for God and God alone, prayer can only become unceasing prayer when all our thoughts—beautiful or ugly, high or low, proud or shameful, sorrowful or joyful—can be thought in the presence of God."

Henri J.M. Nouwen

1. Do you ever get frustrated that life just isn't fair? How do you feel when God's sense of justice is in conflict with your own?
2. Are we envious at times because God loves not only us who are following him from the beginning but also those who came to know and love him later in life or even those who do not follow him at all? Do you feel loved by God?
3. Are you willing to try to discern the expectations God has of you? Can you risk not meeting your own expectations or the ones others have of you?
4. What do you consider to be most stressful about your work? Or your relationship with your coworkers?
5. Have you ever applied for a job and gotten turned down? On the other hand, did you feel grateful when you got a call or letter offering you a job? What role gratitude plays in your life?

## Parable of the Persistent Widow

Lk 18-1-8

persistence in prayer

I could not find record of these questions... if you have them, please send to [st.mary.mm@gmail.com](mailto:st.mary.mm@gmail.com)

## Parable of the Wayward Son

Lk 15: 11-32

the need to seek forgiveness and the celebration of Sacrament of Penance

Questions for Discussion:

1. If you could invite either of the sons to join your table discussion this morning, which one would it be? What would you ask him and what do you think he might say?
2. In what ways does the younger son violate the command to honor his father? How should we face the temptations that interfere with our relationship with the Heavenly Father?
3. How does the older son demonstrate lack of honor and trust in his father? Have you ever been in a situation where a source of joy for a family member resulted in your resentment? What did you learn from this experience?
4. What is God's attitude toward our failures (or those of people we love) when we (or they) repent? How does this parable challenge us to think about Lent, forgiveness, and the grace received through the Sacrament of Penance?
5. As a brother, son, father, or grandfather, has your interpretation of this parable changed as a result of today's discussion? What is your "take away" and how can you share with your family?

*"Then let us celebrate with a feast, because this son of mine was dead, and has come to life again; he was lost, and has been found."* (Lk 15:24)