

Lesson 2 – Catholic Sacramental and Spiritual Life

Prayer is “the strength of the Christian and of every believer. In the weakness and the fragility of our life, we may turn to God with the trust of His son and enter into communion with Him. And Lent is a time for “a more intense and prolonged prayer ... more able to take on the needs of our brothers; prayer of intercession, to intercede before God for many situations of poverty and suffering”.

Fasting “has meaning only if it truly attacks our security, and if it brings benefits to others, if it helps us to cultivate the approach of the good Samaritan, who turns to his brother and takes care of him. Fasting involves choosing a sober style of life; a life without waste, without discarding things. Fasting helps us to train our hearts in simplicity and sharing”.

Almsgiving, giving to charity “means giving freely, because in this way we give to someone from whom we expect nothing in return. Giving freely should be one of the characteristics of the Christian who, aware of having received everything freely from God, that is, undeservingly, learns to give freely to others. ... Giving to charity helps us to live the free nature of the gift, which is freedom from the obsession of possession, of the fear of losing what we have”.

The Deposit of Faith

Sacred Tradition - Long before the New Testament Scriptures about Christ were ever written, the apostles were already setting out to fulfill the Great Commission. In the earliest years of the Church, the Gospel was handed on through various unwritten means: through their preaching, their example, and the institutions they established. Each of these means embodied a living tradition – a whole way of life – that the apostles received directly from living with Christ and from the promptings of the Holy Spirit (CCC 76, DV 7)

Sacred Scriptures - Christ’s message of salvation was put into writing by some of the apostles and their associates. These sacred authors, along with the authors of the Old Testament books, wrote in a human way, making full use of their own abilities and writing styles, with their original audience in mind. But under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, the “consigned to writing whatever he wanted written, and no more.” (CCC 106)

Weekly Reading and Reflection Assignment:

Chapters 35, God Calls Us to Pray

Chapter 36, Jesus Taught Us to Pray

Chapter 7, The Third Commandment: Love the Lord’s Day

How would you describe your prayer life? Name both positive elements and challenges or difficulties in prayer.

Outline and Talk Notes

1. What is Prayer and why is it so important?
 - a. Faith is our response to an experience of God
 - b. Prayer becomes the greatest acting out of our relationship with God. Prayer is opening our heart and speaking to Him as our most beloved friend
 - c. If Jesus prayed to his Father in heaven then how much more do we need?
 - i. The Father's Prayer
 - ii. Fifteen most powerful words
 - iii. Seeking God in all things
2. "If we really understood the Mass, we would die of joy" (St John Vianney)
 - a. "Heaven touches Earth"
 - b. The Mass is not about getting; it is about giving
3. Unexpected Gifts
 - a. Within these pages you will find all the keys to all of life's questions and the keys to all of life's problem.
 - b. Genesis Chapter 3; Adam and Eve in the Garden
 - i. The Fruit; good for food, pleasing to the eyes, and desirable for gaining wisdom
 - ii. The Word of God has the power to transform us.