# Lesson 8 Matthew 6Sermon on the Mount - Stewardship

Life in Christ: When did you feel closest to Our Lord this week?

1. In the Sermon on the Amount, more commonly called, stewardship, we are called upon to give of our time, treasure, and talent. Here Our Lord speaks of our reward. What are some of the reasons you contribute your time, treasure, and talent to charity?

Matthew 6:1

1 “[But] take care not to perform righteous deeds in order that people may see them; otherwise, you will have no recompense from your heavenly Father.

1. In the episode about the widow’s mite, what is Jesus telling us is most important to God in what we give to charity? How is it related to the answer He gave the rich young man?

Mark 12:42

42 A poor widow also came and put in two small coins worth a few cents.

43 Calling his disciples to himself, he said to them, “Amen, I say to you, this poor widow put in more than all the other contributors to the treasury.

44 For they have all contributed from their surplus wealth, but she, from her poverty, has contributed all she had, her whole livelihood.”

Matthew 19:21

Jesus said to him, “If you wish to be perfect, go, sell what you have and give to [the] poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come, follow me.”

1. A. These verses are often used to criticize Catholic repetitive prayers such as the Hail Mary, Chaplet of Divine Mercy, and Litanies. Yet, in the story of the Pharisee and the tax collector, the repetitive prayer of the tax collector is praised by our Lord. What is the purpose of the repetition in theses Catholic prayers?

Matthew 6:7-8

7 In praying, do not babble like the pagans, who think that they will be heard because of their many words.

8 Do not be like them. Your Father knows what you need before you ask him.

Luke 18:10

13 But the tax collector stood off at a distance and would not even raise his eyes to heaven but beat his breast and prayed, ‘O God, be merciful to me a sinner.’

14 I tell you, the latter went home justified, not the former; for everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and the one who humbles himself will be exalted.”

[In Greek and Latin, the words “beat” and “prayed” indicate a repeated (not complete) action]

B What do you think God wants us to do when we pray?

1. The Catechism devotes nearly a hundred numbered paragraphs to the understanding of the Lord’s Prayer. Tertullian, one of the early Church Fathers, calls the Lord’s Prayer the summary of the whole Gospel. What makes the Lord’s Prayer such an important part of our life in Christ?

Catechism 2761

The Lord's Prayer "is truly the summary of the whole gospel." "Since the Lord after handing over the practice of prayer, said elsewhere, 'Ask and you will receive,' and since everyone has petitions which are peculiar to his circumstances, the regular and appropriate prayer [the Lord's Prayer] is said first, as the foundation of further desires."

1. A. Jesus orients our fasting to an interior repentance of the heart according to the Catechism. Why is it important that our fasting be interior?

Matthew 6:17-18

17 But when you fast, anoint your head and wash your face,

18 so that you may not appear to others to be fasting, except to your Father who is hidden. And your Father who sees what is hidden will repay you.

Catechism 1430

Jesus' call to conversion and penance, like that of the prophets before him, does not aim first at outward works, "sackcloth and ashes," fasting and mortification, but at the conversion of the heart, interior conversion. Without this, such penances remain sterile and false; however, interior conversion urges expression in visible signs, gestures and works of penance

B Do you think we should wear our Ash Wednesday ashes throughout the day? Why or why not?

1. A. How do we store up treasure in heaven? Remember the rich young man in question 2.

Matthew 15:18-19

19 “Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and decay destroy, and thieves break in and steal.

20 But store up treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor decay destroys, nor thieves break in and steal.

21 For where your treasure is, there also will your heart be

B Is storing up treasure in heaven why we pray, celebrate Sacraments, and give our time treasure and talents to charity?

1. In modern English Jesus’ comments about a sound or bad eye is somewhat obscure. To the Jewish Christian audience to whom St Matthew was writing, a sound eye meant a generous disposition; a bad eye was a covetous or stingy disposition. How is the concept of a generous disposition in keeping with the rest of the Sermon on the Mount?

Matthew 6:22-23

22 “The lamp of the body is the eye. If your eye is sound, your whole body will be filled with light;

23 but if your eye is bad, your whole body will be in darkness. And if the light in you is darkness, how great will the darkness be.

1. A. What besides idols for worship can be the forbidden “mammon” in this sense?

Matthew 6:24

24 “No one can serve two masters. He will either hate one and love the other, or be devoted to one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon.

Catechism 2113

2113 Idolatry not only refers to false pagan worship. It remains a constant temptation to faith. Idolatry consists in divinizing what is not God. Man commits idolatry whenever he honors and reveres a creature in place of God, whether this be gods or demons (for example, satanism), power, pleasure, race, ancestors, the state, money, etc. Jesus says, "You cannot serve God and mammon." Many martyrs died for not adoring "the Beast" refusing even to simulate such worship. Idolatry rejects the unique Lordship of God; it is therefore incompatible with communion with God.

B What things attract you to invest your time, treasure, and talent in place of God?

1. Is Jesus saying, “Don’t worry, be happy. Just sit back, relax, and everything will come to you? How does the Catechism help us understand what God desires of us?

Matthew 6:31-34

31 So do not worry and say, ‘What are we to eat?’ or ‘What are we to drink?’ or ‘What are we to wear?’

32 All these things the pagans seek. Your heavenly Father knows that you need them all.

33 But seek first the kingdom [of God] and his righteousness, and all these things will be given you besides.

34 Do not worry about tomorrow; tomorrow will take care of itself. Sufficient for a day is its own evil.

Catechism 307

307 To human beings God even gives the power of freely sharing in his providence by entrusting them with the responsibility of "subduing" the earth and having dominion over it. God thus enables men to be intelligent and free causes in order to complete the work of creation, to perfect its harmony for their own good and that of their neighbors. Though often unconscious collaborators with God's will, they can also enter deliberately into the divine plan by their actions, their prayers and their sufferings. They then fully become "God's fellow workers" and co-workers for his kingdom