

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

2. Meditate (Find) — 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 (Ask) — 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 (Taste) — Be quiet before the Lord enjoying His presence. **How is God calling you to act in response to what he has shown you?**

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[1] footnotes Matthew 13:44 NAB

[2] Merriam-Webster Dictionary

[3] Saint Turibius de Mongrovejo

Quick Connect

What is the Gospel saying? Matthew 13:44-52 — Pg. 1

What is the Church saying Past and Present? Pages 1-3

What is God saying to you through this passage? Page 4

Gospel Reading – Matthew 13:44-52 – Roman Missal

Jesus said to his disciples: “The kingdom of heaven is like a treasure buried in a field, which a person finds and hides again, and out of joy goes and sells all that he has and buys that field. Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant searching for fine pearls. When he finds a pearl of great price, he goes and sells all that he has and buys it. Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a net thrown into the sea, which collects fish of every kind. When it is full they haul it ashore and sit down to put what is good into buckets. What is bad they throw away. Thus it will be at the end of the age. The angels will go out and separate the wicked from the righteous and throw them into the fiery furnace, where there will be wailing and grinding of teeth. “Do you understand all these things?” They answered, “Yes.” And he replied, “Then every scribe who has been instructed in the kingdom of heaven is like the head of a household who brings from his storeroom both the new and the old.”

Spiritual Reading – Office of Readings – 17th Week of OT (Tuesday)

From a sermon on charity by Saint Basil the Great, Bishop

You are going to leave your money behind you here whether you wish to or not. On the other hand, you will take with you to the Lord the honor that you have won through good works. In the presence of the universal judge, all the people will surround you, acclaim you as a public benefactor, and tell of your generosity and kindness. Do you not see how people throw away their wealth on theatrical performances, boxing contests, mimes and fights between men and wild beasts, which are sickening to see, and all for the sake of fleeting honor and popular applause? If you are miserly with your money, how can you expect similar honor? Your reward for the right use of the things of this world will be everlasting glory, a crown of righteousness, and the kingdom of heaven; God will welcome you, the angels will praise you, all men who have existed since the world began will call you blessed. Do you care nothing for these things, and spurn the hopes that lie in the future for the sake of your present enjoyment. Come, distribute your wealth freely, give generously to those who are in need. Earn for yourself the psalmist’s praise: He gave freely to the poor; his righteousness will endure for ever. How grateful you should be to your own benefactor; how you should beam with joy at the honor of having other people come to your door, instead of being obliged to go to theirs! But you are now ill-humored and unapproachable; you avoid meeting people, in case you might be forced to loosen your purse-strings even a little. You can say

only one thing: “I have nothing to give you. I am only a poor man.” A poor man you certainly are, and destitute of all riches; you are poor in love, generosity, faith in God and hope of eternal happiness.

Finding Treasure – Part I – Lesson and Discussion

“The Kingdom is like finding treasure”

Chapter 13 of Saint Matthew’s Gospel is full of parables and today’s Gospel reading is the last of those parables. Jesus’ parables have layers of meaning that both people then and people now can seek to uncover. Jesus explains the meaning of many of the parables for the people who are listening. However, Jesus challenges the disciples to better understand these last parables dealing with a treasure, a pearl and a net.

Why does Jesus ask if they understand the parables? There is a key point in these parables that Jesus wants to get through. He shifts gears and instead of focusing on a collective, these parables look to the individuals. It is a single person going out and seeking the kingdom of Heaven in the pearl and coin. Jesus asks if they understand so they can be the new scribes to bring about the fulfillment of the new kingdom He was setting up. They were the ones who would help explain how Jesus fulfilled the old covenant with the new one.

Why are they in search of a pearl or treasure? During the time of Jesus, it was not unusual to guard valuables by burying them in the ground.[1] The Holy Land was also a main highway for armies and merchants. If war broke out it was not unusual for a person to bury their valuables. If that person died during the uprising, it could be possible that no one knew where the treasure was buried and an unrelated person could find it.

We go out and seek various treasures for many reasons, sometimes we find these treasures and sometimes we do not. When it comes to finding the truth, we will always find it but we must go out and look for it. The truth is so powerful that once it is found, we will do whatever it takes to obtain this truth. Jesus brings the fullness of the kingdom to us, but we can be blinded by our sin. When we finally see what He offers, we must be willing to take the treasures of the kingdom with open arms.

Jesus offers the truth and we seek the truth. Pontius Pilate asks the question that we all ask, “What is truth?” Pontius Pilate only asks the question, but does he really want the truth, does he seek the truth. In the Gospel of John, we hear Pontius Pilate’s response to meeting Jesus, “What is truth?” When he had said this, he again went out to the Jews and said to them, ‘I find no guilt in him. But you have a custom that I release one prisoner to you at Passover. Do you want me to release to you the King of the Jews?’ They cried out again, ‘Not this one but Barabbas!’ Now Barabbas was a revolutionary.” (John 18:38-40)

Does Pontius Pilate really want the truth? No, Pontius Pilate does not want truth. He asks the question, but he does not do what the man in the parable does. The man in the parable “finds” the truth, then he “goes out with joy” to get the truth and he “sells all” to obtain the truth. We do not see Pilate “finding the truth,” he only asks the question and does not seek further. We also do not see Pilate “going out with joy,” rather he goes out with doubt and confusion and asks the “crowd” what he should do. We also do not see Pilate “selling all” but rather “selling out.” The verb “to sell out” means to compromise one’s integrity, morality, or principles in exchange for money or success.[2] Pilate compromises his search for truth and exchanges truth for falsehood.

How does he compromise the truth? Pilate compromises the truth by succumbing to the temptation to seek truth somewhere other than Jesus. We are tempted in the same way Pilate is tempted. We ask the question, “What is truth?” but then we ask the wrong source for the answer. Pilate asked the crowd. When we ask the question “What is Truth?” many times we ask our self, our friends, and the world, but do we ask Christ, do we ask the Church. The challenge for us and for Pilate is to go immediately to the source of truth. Jesus, the source of truth and in fact Truth Himself, is standing right in front of him, yet Pilate does not go to the source. Jesus is standing right in front of us and in the Blessed Sacrament is present near us in the tabernacle and yet many times we do not go straight to the source.

How do we know that Christ and His Church are the source of truth? Jesus says, “I am the Way and the Truth and the Life.” (John 14:6) If we believe Jesus, then we must accept that He is the Truth. “Christ said, ‘I am the Truth;’ He did not say, ‘I am the custom.’”[3] Customs come and go, but the truth is forever. If we are accustomed to turning to the custom or what is popular rather than turning to the truth, we will be confused and lost in a world of lies. Pontius Pilate turns from the truth to the “custom” of the Jewish people. Christ promises the apostles to send them the Holy Spirit and says to them at the Last Supper, “But when he comes, the Spirit of truth, he will guide you to all truth.” (John 16:13) We know that Christ and the Church are the source of Truth because the Holy Trinity is Truth, the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. God is both unchanging and the fullness of Truth, since God became man through the Incarnation, we must hold that the fullness of Truth became flesh in Jesus Christ. We must also accept that Truth has been sent to guide the Church through the Holy Spirit. Where else would we go? Like Saint Peter we can say, “Master, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life.” (John 6:68)