

Sunday, June 5, 2016

Meditation and Questions for Reflection or Group Discussion

Mass Readings:

1st Reading: 1 Kings 17:17-24

2nd Reading: Galatians 1:11-19

Responsorial: Psalm 30:2; 4-6; 11-13

Gospel: Luke 7:11-17

Seeking and Experiencing Revelation from God

It came through a revelation. (Galatians 1:12)

One of the great joys in life is receiving what St. Paul called “revelation” from God—that experience of sensing his presence and feeling led or taught by his Holy Spirit. Here are a few insights into what this revelation is and how we can experience it ourselves.

First, at the Last Supper, Jesus told his apostles, “I have called you friends, because I have told you everything I have heard from my Father” (John 15:15). If you want to be a friend of Jesus, make time for him; listen to him, just as you would listen to a friend.

Second, religious cults tell us to “empty our minds” if we want to meditate. But Scripture tells us to fill our minds with God’s word and to meditate on his unfailing love (Psalm 48:9), his mighty deeds (77:12), his precepts (119:15), and his promises (119:148). So make time to read God’s word each day, and ask the Spirit to write that word on your heart.

Third, having the right disposition also counts. Jesus once thanked his Father for having “hidden these things from the wise and the learned” and having “revealed them to the childlike” (Matthew 11:25). Children are trusting, uncomplicated, teachable, and content with little things. So try to be childlike in your prayer, eager to be with your heavenly Father.

God wants to reveal himself to us. He wants to show us how much he loves us. He also wants to speak to us in the quiet of our hearts—perhaps to ask us to be more kind and generous or to speak to that lonely person we just walked past or to have a heart for the poor. The more we come to God, the more we will hear his voice.

It’s interesting how we can detect temptation more easily than we can detect God’s voice. Maybe it’s because of a lack of practice. So seek the Lord; ask him for revelation. Who knows? Maybe you’ll be surprised by what comes into your mind by the power of the Spirit.

“Jesus, imprint your word on my heart. I want to know your will.”

(Many thanks to *The Word Among Us* (www.wau.org) for allowing us to use meditations from their monthly devotional magazine. Used with permission.)

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Questions for Reflection or Discussion

1. In the first reading, we see the great compassion the prophet Elijah had for the widow from Zarapeth, with whom he was staying. We also see the power of his prayers of intercession, which resulted in the widow's son being restored to life. How strong is your confidence and trust in the Lord when you pray for others with serious needs? What are the obstacles that keep you from interceding for others with an expectant faith that the Lord will hear and answer your prayer in some way? What steps can you take to overcome them?
2. The responsorial psalm is a heartfelt psalm of praise and thanksgiving which ends with these words: "You changed my mourning into dancing. O Lord, my God, forever will I give you thanks." In what areas of your life would you like to give thanks to the Lord for changing your "mourning into dancing"?
3. In the second reading, St. Paul says that his understanding of the truths of the Gospel did not come about by just personal study or rote acceptance of doctrines or teachings, but "through a revelation of Jesus Christ." What about you? In what way is your faith based on an interior revelation that Jesus Christ is who he says he, that is, your Lord and Savior, who died on the Cross for your sins?
4. In the Gospel reading, Jesus, moved with pity, raises a widow's son from the dead (as did Elijah in the first reading). Do you believe Jesus' heart is moved with pity when he sees you in a difficult circumstance? Do you believe when you can't rely on your own powers or abilities in a given situation, you can still trust in the Lord's power and his great love for you? In what ways might these questions apply to you right now
5. Notice also in the Gospel reading, the reaction from the crowd of people who witnessed the miraculous raising of the widow's son. "Fear seized them all, and they glorified God, exclaiming, 'A great prophet has arisen in our midst, and 'God has visited his people.' " What is your reaction when you read the Gospel accounts of Jesus raising various people from the dead? Does it give you great confidence and faith that one day you will be raised from the dead, and you too will glorify God? If not, why not?
6. The meditation describes the importance of receiving revelation from the Lord in our lives. It describes revelation as "that experience of sensing his presence and feeling led or taught by his Holy Spirit." How does this definition match the ways you have received revelation from the Lord?
7. The meditation goes on to say that "God wants to reveal himself to us. He wants to show us how much he loves us. He also wants to speak to us in the quiet of our hearts—perhaps to ask us to be more kind and generous or to speak to that lonely person we just walked past or to have a heart for the poor. The more we come to God, the more we will hear his voice." Do you agree with these words? Why or why not?
8. The meditation also provides these steps to experiencing the Lord's revelation: "make time for him; listen to him, just as you would listen to a friend," "make time to read God's word each day, and ask the Spirit to write that word on your heart," and "try to be childlike in your prayer, eager to be with your heavenly Father". How can these steps be incorporated in a greater way in your spiritual life?
9. Take some time now to pray and ask the Lord to deepen your knowledge and experience of his revelation so you can draw closer to him and accomplish his will for your life. Use the prayer at the end of the meditation as a starting point.

[The discussion questions were created by Maurice Blumberg, a director of partner relations for **The Word Among Us Partners**, (<http://www.waupartners.org/>); a ministry of **The Word Among Us** (www.wau.org) to the military, prisoners, women with crisis pregnancies or who have had abortions, and college students. He is also a member of the National Service Committee Council of the Catholic Charismatic Renewal. Maurice was also the founding Executive Director of the **National Fellowship of Catholic Men**, for which he is currently a Trustee (<http://www.nfcmus.org/>). He can be contacted at mblumberg@wau.org or mblumberg@aol.com.]

As posted on the Catholic Charismatic Renewal National Service Committee's website: www.nsc-chariscenter.org