



Sixteenth Sunday of Ordinary Time (Year B)



Mark 6: 30 – 34

The Apostles returned from their mission. They gathered around Jesus, and told him all that they had done and taught.

He said to them, “Come away to a deserted place all by yourselves and rest a while.” For many were coming and going, and they had no leisure even to eat. And they went away in the boat to a deserted place by themselves.

Now many saw them going and recognized them, and they hurried there on foot from all the towns and arrived ahead of them. As Jesus went ashore, he saw a great crowd; and he had compassion for them, because they were like sheep without a shepherd; and he began to teach them many things.

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Reflection:

Wow! I am sure the Apostles had some stories to tell. Hot off their first attempt to bring Christ’s message to the world, they wanted to tell Jesus all about it. “Come away to a deserted place by yourselves and rest a while.” Jesus is giving them the opportunity to unwind, share their stories and spend some time together. This is a big part of what family life is all about. After spending all day in the world, now is the time to unwind, share our stories and spend some time together.



Table Discussion (at mealtime):

Take turns sharing one story of your day’s happenings with the rest of the family. (This could be a regular part of your dinner-time conversation. If you suspect your child is struggling to share something, that they are unwilling to share at this time, check in with them later, in the privacy of their room.)



Spending Time Alone with Christ:

We all need quiet time. Our lives are so full of activity, we need time to process, to think and to reflect. Jesus is often begging us to go off to a lonely place with him so that we can unwind. Prayer isn't so much a flurry of words and activity as it is a time to ponder and to treasure. This time can be spent in a little area set up for prayer, in a comfortable chair or relaxing in the bathtub or jacuzzi. The only two stipulations are that we dedicate it to God and we spend our time scrolling through the events, thoughts and actions of the day.

A Suggested Format:

Start with the sign of the cross.

- Say: "Speak Lord, your servant is listening."
- Let your mind drift on the day's events (or one specific event).
- Offer it to / thank God.

End with "the Lord's Prayer", a "Glory Be...", or the refrain of a Hymn to God.

Interruptions to Prayer:

I believe it was St. Vincent de Paul who said: "When we are interrupted in our prayers, we are simply leaving one conversation with God in order to engage in another." Mothers, especially, find it hard to find long sustained periods for personal prayer. Shorter, more frequent, moments may be in keeping with your day's work. Quiet times at the beginning and/or end of the day may also be explored. There is something to be said about the fact that Jesus, too, had his plans interrupted. Having taken the Apostles away to a deserted place, with the intention of spending some much needed quiet time with them, He is followed by the crowds. Notice how Jesus pivots, instead of continuing with his original plan, he addresses the crowds out of compassion for them.

Finding God in the Compassion you have for your Children:

Isn't it nice to know you are needed? When you are interrupted from prayer, sometimes it is as simple as taking a deep breath, raising a quick prayer to God (asking for strength and compassion) and a renewed effort to love them in that moment.

A Mother's Prayer:

You are encouraged to write your own prayer and post it in your room somewhere.

You may want to include:

- Gratitude for the gift of family/children.
- The desire you had in having a family of your own.
- The grace you need to address the daily demands.
- The desire to share it all with God.

You can also find one of many "Mother's Prayers" on the internet. **A Father's Prayer:**

You are encouraged to write your own prayer and post it in your room somewhere.

You may want to include:

- Gratitude for the gift of family/children.
- The joy of sharing in the gift of new life.
- The grace you need when it all seems too much.
- The need you have for God.

You can also find one of many “Father’s Prayers” on the internet.

Be Still and Know that I am God (Psalm 46:10):

Psalm 46 is an excellent psalm for all those who need to spend some time alone with God. You can also find several songs and meditations on the internet using the title above. Take some time to sit and meditate in stillness. You may even want to write a short letter to God in response to his presence and faithfulness in your life.

(Other Psalms: Psalm 42, Psalm 121, Psalm 63)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EPIwmbPTQDw> Combines “Be still” with words from the prophets Isaiah and Jeremiah

To Each a Different Path to Holiness (St. Francis de Sales):

To each a different path, each according to the Call God has set before them. So writes St. Francis de Sales to his cousin. The spiritual journey is different for the gentleman as for the mechanic; for the rich as for the poor; for the married, the single or the widowed; and it is also different according to one’s abilities, temperament, experience and duties.

It would not make any sense, St Francis de Sales goes on to say, if the Bishop, who is in charge of the running of the Church, would want to live in the same way as a monk, who spends his time in physical work and prayer; or if a parent, who is in charge of earning money for his/her family would treat money in the same way as does the poor Franciscan; if the labourer spent all his time in church like the professed religious; or if the professed religious was to get as involved with matters of the world as does a lawyer, bookkeeper or politician. To each, therefore, a different path, each according to the Call God has set before them.

Having a strong relationship with God, St. Francis de Sales goes on to say, does no harm to that which we are called to do, but only makes it better. Family life is more peaceful, married life is made stronger, our responsibility to our country and fellow human beings more Christ-like and, no matter our profession, more geared to the good.

Every occupation can benefit from a closer relationship with God and the desire to become holier on our part. This is true of a soldier’s life or a merchant’s shop, a hospital ward or a grade school class. It is also true for the richest household as it is for the poorest. Prayer, love service, generosity and forgiveness are as necessary in one as it is in the other, each adapting what is good and holy to the circumstances, the type of activity being done and the people who are involved.

Spend some time bringing your particular life, work and activities before God in prayer. Reflect on how you can be more open to God's Call in all that you do. You may want to write some what you learn in prayer in your prayer journal.

Spending some time with Jesus:

Children can find great enjoyment spending a minute or two with Jesus in prayer. You may want to encourage them to place their troubles and concerns before Jesus. You may want to encourage your younger children to draw a picture of them bringing their concerns to Jesus.