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Suggested Materials:

- (1) *Waiting for Christ* (Book) by St. John Henry Newman;
- (2) *Brother Francis* (Audio) by Augustine Institute;
- (3) *Don't Give up, Give Thanks!* (Audio CD) by Ascension Press;
- (4) *Renewing Our Hope: Essays for the New Evangelization* (Book) by Bishop Robert Barron;
- (5) *Life is Worth Living* (Audio CD) by Fulton Sheen.

For more resources visit www.bmjsajonas.com

Pilgrimages: If you are interested in the near future to join a pilgrimage, you can email Fr. Bernabe Millan Sajonas to inquire. You can also check the upcoming activities of Fr. Millan at <https://www.bmjsajonas.com/upcoming-activities> Let us continue to pray for one another! God bless you!

Faith Formation: For online resources, please visit <https://www.bmjsajonas.com/adult-faith-formation>

Next issue's contents:

Matthew 20:1-16: The parable of the laborers in the vineyard; getting to know a catholic devotion; Bible Study, resources for faith formation, and much more...

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IN MINISTERIO DEI ET VERBI SUI

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Luke 14:31-32: The Parable of the King's Plan

By Fr. Bernabe Millan Sajonas

The parable of the king's plan may refer to the importance of discernment in following the Lord. Discipleship itself is a gift from God. The free grace enables us to follow Jesus by giving strength and perseverance to endure difficulties and trials, which may be required to live the faithful life as a disciple. Therefore, there has to be participation in the grace of God. Being a disciple of Christ makes demands, so it is not to be taken lightly. A disciple has to plan and make preparations and in order to respond devotedly to God's free grace of discipleship. Preparation and planning can also be seen as one's participation and answer to the Lord's invitation, "Follow me."

In the parable, the king sits to prepare for the possibility of war with another king and to analyze whether his army is strong enough to win. If it is not, the king will seek peace. A disciple, meanwhile, has to discern the demands of discipleship: whether one has what it takes to sustain, and to persevere, walking in the path of Christ. An important part of this preparation and planning is the realization of the need of God's grace to continue being a disciple of the Lord. Discernment requires praying often, which is an encounter with God. Discernment is the understanding of the need for the sacraments, specially the Holy Eucharist, which nourishes our spiritual life.

Preparation and planning will allow you to become a more effective witnesses of Christ to others. There is, again, the acknowledgement of the need for God's help and guidance, for no one can do anything good, holy, and truthful without God. However, being receptive to God's bountiful grace requires that the intention to do the charitable act be not merely for the sake of performing the deed, but in order to glorify the Lord. Moreover, it is not only a momentary act or one great deed, which is being accomplished for the love of God, or serving others. Rather, charity has to abound in one's life, a way of living, so as to really endure in the path of following the Lord, living the demands of responding to Christ's invitation to be His disciple.

Reflection Questions

1. How do you think the Lord is asking you to be His disciple?
2. What are the things that you do to deepen your relationship with the Lord?
3. Where do you find inspiration to persevere in being a disciple of Christ?
4. How do you plan to give witness to the Lord to others?
5. Why do you think that charitable deeds need to abound in one's life to endure in being a disciple of Christ?

Eucharistic Adoration

Jesus is really present in the Eucharist; Body, Blood, Soul, and Divinity in the appearance of the consecrated host. The exposition of the Blessed Sacrament happens when the consecrated host is taken from the tabernacle to be placed before the people; often in a monstrance. An appropriate song is sung at the beginning such as “O Salutaris” for the exposition.

There have been many ways to help the faithful pray before the Blessed Sacrament. Often, there is a period of silence observed. Some have instrumental background music. Others take time to pray the rosary silently or as a group. Still others read the Scripture. Depending how long the adoration is, there should always be time for silence, to commune with the Lord. The rest of the time could be filled up with different prayers, readings, and meditations. To end the Eucharistic Adoration, there is the Benediction, signaled by an appropriate song such as “Tantum Ergo.” This is accompanied with the incensing the Blessed Sacrament. After the singing and incensing, there is a call to prayer, which is addressed to God. The priest says, “You have given us Bread from heaven.” The people reply, “Having all sweetness within it,” or “The Source of all happiness.” It is then followed with an appropriate prayer. At the end of the prayer, the people answer “Amen.” Then, the priest elevates the monstrance and makes the sign of the cross to bless the people. This act may be accompanied with a layperson or altar server incensing the elevated monstrance. When the priest settles again the monstrance, the “Divine Praises” are recited. While repositioning the Blessed Sacrament, an appropriate song may be sung. It may be followed by a recessional hymn.

When is Adoration to be done? Some say before Mass so that the faithful may receive Christ whom they have worshiped and adored in the Blessed Sacrament. The Mass is the culmination of the adoration. Others say after Mass, so as to meditate and reflect on what the faithful have received. It prolongs the time of prayer where the faithful worship and adore Christ, who chose to give Himself to us in the Holy Mass. It really does not matter if the Eucharistic Adoration is itself separate from the Mass. It is a time given to the Lord in the Blessed Sacrament, and it may be given at any time of the day. A simple prayer before the tabernacle can also be done, when there is no Eucharistic Exposition and Benediction. However, the rite is to be encouraged, so that the faithful may realize how great a gift we receive in the Holy Mass. We receive nothing other than our Lord Jesus Christ, our God, and our King, truly present Body, Blood, Soul, and Divinity. Our prayer is that we may be transformed into the likeness of the Lord whom we consume in the Most Blessed Sacrament.

Grotto in the Basilica of the Annunciation



Read: Luke 1:26-38

The Basilica of the Annunciation contains the cave venerated since the 3rd century as the home of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

Reflection Questions:

1. What does God want to bring to you, as good news?
2. Have you been a bringer of good news to others? How?
3. What will be your answer to God's invitation to be a bearer of God in your words and actions, or to be His witness? Why?
4. Have you sometimes questioned God's will in your life? Why?
5. Think about how Mary accepted God's invitation and agreed to become the mother of Jesus. How do you participate in God's unfolding plan for you like Mary?