

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] Saint Faustina; Divine Mercy in my Soul; Sections 8-10

[2] YouCat – Youth Catechism of the Catholic Church; Section 110

[3] See the Breastplate of Saint Patrick prayer

Quick Connect

What is the Gospel saying? Matthew 25:1-13 — 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 25:1-13 – Roman Missal

Jesus told His Disciples this parable: “The kingdom of heaven will be like ten virgins who, took their lamps and went out to meet the bridegroom. Five of them were foolish and five were wise. The foolish ones, when taking their lamps, brought no oil with them, but the wise brought flasks of oil with their lamps. Since the Bridegroom was long delayed, they all became drowsy and fell asleep. At midnight, there was a cry, ‘Behold, the Bridegroom! Come out to meet him!’ Then all those virgins got up and trimmed their lamps. The foolish ones said to the wise, ‘Give us some of your oil, for our lamps are going out.’ But the wise ones replied, ‘No, for there may not be enough for us and you. Go instead to the merchants and buy some for yourselves.’ While they went off to buy it, the bridegroom came and those who were ready went into the wedding feast with him. Then the door was locked. Afterwards the other virgins came and said, ‘Lord, Lord, open the door for us!’ But he said in reply, ‘Amen, I say to you, I do not know you.’ Therefore, stay awake, for you know neither the day nor the hour.”

Spiritual Reading – Office of Readings – Wednesday of the 32nd Week of Ordinary Time

From a homily written in the second century

For the sake of eternal life, my brothers, let us do the will of the Father who called us, resisting the temptations that lead us into sin and striving earnestly to advance in virtue. Let us revere God for fear of the evils that spring from impiety. If we are zealous in doing good, we shall have peace, but there is no peace for those who, governed by human respect, prefer present enjoyment to the future promises. They realize neither the torment that is laid up for them on account of these momentary pleasures, nor the joy of the promises to come. And indeed it could be endured if their conduct affected only themselves, but as it is, they persist in corrupting the innocent, unaware that they incur a double condemnation, for themselves and their disciples. So let us serve God with a pure heart, and then we shall be living as we should. If we fail to serve him because of our disbelief, we shall only be miserable. Wretched are those of wavering faith, says the prophet, the people who doubt in their hearts and say: We heard all this even when our parents were alive and day after day we have waited in vain for any proof of it. O foolish ones! Think of a tree, and see how you resemble it. A vine, for example, first sheds its leaves and then the bud appears; after that there comes the sour grape and finally a cluster of ripened fruit. So it is

with my people. They have had their tumults and afflictions, but *afterward will come their reward.*

Waiting and Watching (Part II) - Lesson and Discussion

“Behold, the bridegroom!”

It is not only we that watch and wait for Christ, but Christ that watches and waits for us. We remember the father in the parable of the prodigal son. The father watched and waited.

How long will we make Our Father wait and watch for us? Why

does He wait and watch for us? In the early 1900’s a young teenager, while at a dance with her friends, had a mystical experience in her soul in which Jesus asked her, “How long shall I put up with you and how long will you keep putting Me off?” We don’t have to have a mystical experience for Jesus to ask each of us, “How long will you make me watch and wait?” The teenager ceased the day and without hesitation, made Jesus watch and wait no longer; she followed the call to become a nun and became an apostle of God’s Divine Mercy. Saint Faustina was just like any other teenager. The difference is that she chose to no longer make Jesus watch or wait and when she made that decision, her life and many other lives were transformed. Through Saint Faustina, Jesus brought the message of Divine Mercy to the world. This young teenager became the first canonized Saint in the new millennium. When we stop putting Jesus off, we to will become the Saints of the new minimum.

“The eighteenth year of my life. An earnest appeal to my parents for permission to enter the convent. My parents’ flat refusal. After this refusal, I turned myself over to the vain things of life, paying no attention to the call of grace, although my soul found no satisfaction in any of these things. The incessant call of grace caused me much anguish; I tried, however, to stifle it with amusements. Interiorly, I shunned God, turning with all my heart to creatures. However, God’s grace won out in my soul. Once I was at a dance [probably in Lodz] with one of my sisters. While everybody was having a good time, my soul was experiencing deep torments. As I began to dance. I suddenly saw Jesus at my side, Jesus racked with pain, stripped of His clothing, all covered with wounds, who spoke these words to me: How long shall I put up with you and how long will you keep putting Me off? At that moment the charming music stopped, [and] the company I was with vanished from my sight; there remained Jesus and I. I took a seat by my dear sister, pretending to have a headache in order to cover up what took place in my soul. After a while I slipped out unnoticed, leaving my sister and all my companions behind and made my way to the Cathedral of Saint Stanislaus Kostka. It was almost twilight; there were only a few people in the cathedral. Paying no attention to what was happening around me, I fell prostrate before the Blessed Sacrament and begged the Lord to be good enough to give me to understand what I should do

next. Then I heard these words: Go at once to Warsaw; you will enter a convent there. I rose from prayer, came home, and took care of things that needed to be settled. As best I could, I confided to my sister what took place within my soul. I told her to say good-bye to our parents, and thus, in my one dress, with no other belongings, I arrived in Warsaw.”[1]

Christ waits and watches and desires to be united with us. **How do we know if we are united with Christ?** We can ask a few questions:[2]

Who do we put first in our life? He is over us, and the only One to whom we bend the knee in worship. **Who do we obey?** He is with us as head of his Church, in which the Kingdom of God begins even now; **Who is leading us, and who is our source of power?** He is ahead of us as Lord of history, in whom the powers of darkness are definitively overcome and the destinies of the world are brought to perfection according to God’s plan. **Who is our hope and idea of perfection?** He comes to meet us in glory, on a day we do not know, to renew and perfect the world.

If we do not want to be with Christ in this life, why would we want to be with Him in the afterlife? Many people may have the desire to go to heaven. Heaven is unity with God. **What would make us want to be united with God, then, but not really care to be united with God now? Is it just because we don’t want to go to hell?** We can desire God out of fear or out of love and we know that love conquers all fear, so let us then love God and love God now.

If we can answer these questions truthfully, we will come to realize that Christ should not be “a part” of our life but should be our life. We can then pray as Saint Patrick prayed, “Christ with me, Christ before me, Christ behind me, Christ in me, Christ beneath me, Christ above me, Christ on my right, Christ on my left, Christ when I lie down, Christ when I sit down, Christ when I arise, Christ in the heart of every man who thinks of me, Christ in the mouth of everyone who speaks of me, Christ in every eye that sees me, Christ in every ear that hears me.”[3]

Why don’t we at times feel Christ with us, before us, behind us,

etc.? We can experience his nearness especially:

in God’s Word

in the reception of the Sacraments

in caring for the poor

and wherever “two are three are gathered in my name” (see Mt. 18:20).