

GATHERED INSPIRED SENT



One of the great gifts that the Second Vatican Council gave to the Church is the wide availability of the Sacred Scriptures in the languages of the world. Understanding the importance of the Scriptures to the life and teaching of the Church, the fathers of Vatican II desired that all people in all locations of the world have scripture readily available. In addition to having the sacred texts translated into the varied languages of the world, the council fathers likewise strongly encouraged both the praying and studying of scripture to nurture the individual's faith life. From its earliest beginnings, the Church's worship always contained the two most sacred aspects: the proclamation of scripture and the celebration of the Lord's Supper (the Eucharist). In the liturgical reform after the council, the proclamation of the scriptures in the vernacular of the locale was restored. The council fathers wanted to underscore the importance of a daily encounter with the word of God in the scriptures. How blessed we are by the council's work.

In the life of the Servite Friar, the praying, reading and study of the scriptures is of great importance. It is our daily encounter with Jesus, the Word of God, through his word in the scriptures. With the communal celebration of the Eucharist and the Liturgy of the Hours, our encounter with scripture is the daily sustenance of communal and personal

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growth. The Constitutions of the Servite Order instruct that the community is to ensure each friar has at least one-half hour daily for the meditation on the scriptures. Likewise, scripture forms a part of the community's common prayer as well. From the first days of initial formation, the student learns how to pray and study

scripture. He becomes comfortable encountering the Lord through the sacred texts. The importance of scripture in the life of the friar is underscored by its constant presence in our life.

Sacred Scripture is God's word to us. Within the sacred pages are found the





love-story betwixt God and humanity. No matter the level of faithfulness that humanity shows in their covenant with God, God remains ever faithful to humanity, to us. Even in the portions of scripture where God is angry or disappointed with humanity, God never loses faith with humanity. This is the Good News that Jesus proclaimed. The faithful reading and praying of scripture attunes us to the word that God continually speaks to the human heart, love. Lectio Divina, the rosary, and other prayer forms likewise attune our hearts

this in article 27: “the desire for God is written in the human heart, because man is created by God and for God; and God never ceases to draw man to himself. Only in God will he find the truth and happiness he never stops searching for...” Yet, even with the desire of God written on our hearts, it can be difficult to hear the voice of the Lord. So many voices clamor for our attention. An excessive level of noise fills our world. Hearing and listening to the voice of the Lord can be difficult even as we desire to do so. Learning to discern the voice of the Lord by praying and studying

Reflection Questions:

1. Prayerfully Read John 10:1-18. What “word” is the Lord speaking to me, at this moment in my life? What meaning might this “word” have in my life at present?

2. What is the Good Shepherd asking of me? What does this feel like? Am I willing to respond? Why?

to the voice of the Lord. Lastly, creating moments of silence with scripture, turning off the noise around us, invites us to focus on the Lord’s voice who speaks the word that we need for the present moment of our lives. Cultivating the frequent use of Scripture, prayer methods and silence invites Jesus to speak His word to us. These tools cultivate within us the ability to hear and to respond to Jesus, our Risen Good Shepherd.

the scriptures can help in the discernment process. God’s word reminds us always that we are loved and God is faithful. Two important reminders as we clarify God call for our lives in discernment.

Discernment is not a task undertaken just by persons deciding to enter the consecrated life or the priesthood. Discernment should be an on-going, daily part of our prayer. Discernment is equipping ourselves as believers, as the flock of Jesus, to hear, recognize, listen and wholeheartedly respond to the Divine Voice. The tools of this process of equipping ourselves are the Scriptures; favorite prayer methods and silence.

We are the desire of God’s love. All of the Father’s love is poured out on us and all of creation. This is the blessing of life. The work of the Lord is to facilitate our movement into the mystery of the Father’s love. Responding to God’s love should be easy for us, as the desire for God lies deep within the fabric of our being. The Catechism of the Catholic Church teaches



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