

Topic: Embrace Poverty of Spirit

Family Small Group for Confirmation Week 2.22 (March 19th, 2023)

Parent Resources

These resources are used in the lesson in some way. Parents, consider reading them before doing the lesson with your student. Otherwise, read them within the lesson with your student when directed to do so.

Catechism Readings: *Catechism for Adults*, Ch. 34

- To be a Christian Steward pg. 450
- Disciples as Stewards pg. 451
- Stewards of Vocation pg. 452
- Stewards of the Church pg. 452
- A Steward's Way pg. 454

Article: [Three Lessons from St. Gianna Molla](#)

1. Opening Prayer (read together)

The Canticle of the Sun

Most High, all-powerful, good Lord,
Yours are the praises, the glory, the honor, and all blessings.

To You alone, Most High, do they belong,
and no man is worthy to mention Your name.

Praised be You, my Lord, with all your creatures;
especially Brother Sun, who is the day, and through whom
You give us light.

And he is beautiful and radiant with great splendor,
and bears a likeness to You, Most High One.

Praised be You, my Lord, through Sister Moon and the stars;
in heaven You formed them clear and precious and beautiful.

Praised be You, my Lord, through Brother Wind,
and through the air, cloudy and serene,
and every kind of weather through which You give
sustenance to Your creatures.

Praised be You, my Lord, through Sister Water,
which is very useful and humble and precious and chaste.

Praised be You, my Lord, through Brother Fire,
through whom You light the night;
and he is beautiful and playful and robust and strong.

Praised be You, my Lord, through Sister Mother Earth,
who sustains us and governs us and who produces
varied fruits with colored flowers and herbs.

Praised be You, my Lord,
through those who give pardon for Your love,
and bear infirmity and tribulation.

Blessed are those who endure in peace
for by You, Most High, they shall be crowned.

Praised be You, my Lord,
through our Sister Bodily Death,
from whom no living man can escape.

Woe to those who die in mortal sin.
Blessed are those whom death will find in Your most holy will,
for the second death shall do them no harm.

Praise and bless my Lord,
and give Him thanks,
and serve Him with great humility. Amen.

2. Personal Connection

Read together:

Jesuit priest Kevin O'Brien defines **poverty of spirit** in this way:

"All of us are called to poverty of spirit... which describes a stance of utter dependence before God, not in any demeaning, servile sense, but in the sense [that] God is God, and we are creatures created to praise, love, and serve God. Before all else, we depend on God for our happiness and fulfillment. While we are grateful for our talents, abilities, wealth, and achievements, we are free enough to offer them to the service of God and others and to let go of them when they get in the way of that self-giving.

In short, poverty of spirit is an emptying of self so that God can fill us with life and love."

(Excerpt from *The Ignatian Adventure*)

Parents- Reflect on then discuss the following:

How do you use your time, treasure, and/or talents to serve God and embrace poverty of spirit?

After sharing, ask your student:

What time, treasure, and/or talents do you have?
How could you use them (or how are you using them) to serve God and embrace poverty of spirit?

3. Activity

True or False

As a family, read each quote about poverty (material or spiritual) and guess if it comes from the Bible or somewhere else. An answer key is available at the end of the document.

1. "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven."
This quote is from the Bible. True False
2. "When a poor person dies of hunger, it has not happened because God did not take care of him or her. It has happened because neither you nor I wanted to give that person what he or she needed."
This quote is from the Bible. True False
3. "If you wish to be perfect, go, sell what you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come, follow me."
This quote is from the Bible. True False
4. "The test of our progress is not whether we add more to the abundance of those who have much; it is whether we provide enough for those who have too little."
This quote is from the Bible. True False
5. "We think sometimes that poverty is only being hungry, naked and homeless. The poverty of being unwanted, unloved and uncared for is the greatest poverty. We must start in our own homes to remedy this kind of poverty."
This quote is from the Bible. True False
6. "What profit would there be for one to gain the whole world and forfeit his life?"
This quote is from the Bible. True False
7. "To live with Jesus is to live with the poor. To live with the poor is to live with Jesus."
This quote is from the Bible. True False
8. "Listen, my beloved brothers. Did not God choose those who are poor in the world to be rich in faith and heirs of the kingdom that he promised to those who love him?"
This quote is from the Bible. True False
9. "For you know the gracious act of our Lord Jesus Christ, that for your sake he became poor although he was rich, so that by his poverty you might become rich."
This quote is from the Bible. True False
10. "Make us worthy, Lord, to serve those throughout the world who live and die in poverty or hunger. Give them, through our hands, this day their daily bread; and by our understanding love, give peace and joy. Amen."
This quote is from the Bible. True False

4. Discussion Questions (writing down answers prior to discussion may encourage deeper conversations)

1. Open [Three Lessons from St. Gianna Molla](#) and read about the life of this saint. By most accounts, St. Gianna lived an ordinary life. How then did she model poverty of spirit as defined by priest Kevin O'Brien (above)?
2. In your *Catechism for Adults*, read the intro "To be a Christian Steward" (pg. 450 only) and fill in the following blanks. "As Christian stewards, we receive God's gifts _____, cultivate them _____, share them _____, in justice with others, and return them with _____ to the Lord."
3. Continue reading in the *Catechism for Adults*, "Disciples as Stewards" (pg. 451). What is expected of a disciple, or follower, of Jesus Christ?
4. Read "Stewards of Vocation" (pg. 452), "Stewards of the Church" (pg. 452), and "A Steward's Way" (pg. 454). It tells us that "stewards of God's gifts are not passive beneficiaries" (pg. 452) and that "we [must] be good stewards of the gifts we possess" (pg. 454). Think of St. Gianna Molla and how she was a steward of her gifts in her own hometown. How could you be a steward now and in your future?

5. Closing

Sunday Sanctuary Lesson Reflection:

What moved you the most from Sunday's Sanctuary lesson with Sister Therese? Have you considered God's plan for your life?

End in Prayer:

As a family, discuss your current prayer intentions and take a moment to pray together.

True or False Answer Key

- 1.** True, Matthew 5:3 **2.** False, St. Mother Teresa **3.** True, Matthew 19:21 **4.** False, Franklin D. Roosevelt **5.** False, St. Mother Teresa
6. True, Matthew 16:26 **7.** False, Catholic Theologian Jean Vanier **8.** True, James 2:5 **9.** True, 2 Corinthians 8:9 **10.** False, St. Mother Teresa