

Spirituality for Church Ministry

Deacon Ben Agustin

San Francisco Filipino Cursillo School of Leaders

Saturday, February 13, 2021

Agenda

- Objectives
- Resources
- Canvassing of Ministries
- Spiritual Formation of Ministers
- Discover Your Spiritual Gifts for Ministry

Objectives

- Understand what “Church ministry” is and why it exists.
- Appreciate the need for ongoing spiritual formation in ministry.
- Develop the mindset of a “servant of God”.
- Learn what resources are available.
- Determine what your spiritual gifts are and where they should be employed for optimal service to God and personal satisfaction.

Resources

- Preparing for Church Ministry by Fr. Alfred Hughes
- Discover Your Motivational Spiritual Gifts Questionnaire
- U.S. Catholic Catechism for Adults
- Catechism of the Catholic Church
- Compendium of the Catechism of the Catholic Church
- Catholic Study Bible, 3rd edition edited by Fr. Donald Senior

Canvassing of Ministries

- **How many people here are:**

- Lectors?
- Eucharistic Ministers?
- Choir Members or Musicians?
- Ushers or Greeters?
- Sacristans or Altar Servers?
- Environment Committee?
- Money Counters?
- Finance Committee?
- Pastoral Council?

- Social Activities Committee?
- Social Justice Committee?
- Publicity Committee (parish bulletin)?
- Ministers to Homebound?
- Prayer Groups?
- Social Groups?
- Community Outreach Groups?
- Others...?

Why did God make You?

- To be transformed into the divine *saint* He intended you to become for all eternity.
- Assisted by Christ through relationships, education, opportunities, experiences, and insight to grow in holiness.

What It Takes to Become a Saint

- Requires that we “die to ourselves”, and take on the mind of Christ.
 - Be honest with ourselves; take off our masks.
 - Become vulnerable; be open to change.
 - Admit our imperfections and ignorance.
 - Seek Christ’s values, ways, and mission.
 - Become like Christ.
 - Accept God’s unconditional love.
 - Reflect the love of the Lord for others.

Spiritual Formation of Church Ministers

- Essential for everyone, especially those who minister to others to help them find Christ.
 - This sometimes involves suffering: “dying for others”, swallowing our ego, being understanding, patient, & compassionate with others.
 - Being a life-long learner.
 - Teaching others what you have learned.
- God’s grace and sacraments provide us continual personal assistance in being formed in His image.
- No one carries the total image of our infinite God.
 - Together we become Church and model it for others.

Difference between the Church's Mission and Ministry

- The “**mission**” is global:
 - To save and renew every creature by spreading the kingdom of Christ to everyone for the glory of God the Father.
 - To bring all people to share in Christ's saving redemption.
 - To bring the whole world in relationship with God.
- By baptism and confirmation all of us are incorporated into Christ's life, and expected to join Him in His redemptive love for the world.

“Guadium et Spes”
Pastoral Constitution on the Church
in the Modern World

“The joys and hopes, the griefs and the anxieties of the men in this age, especially those who are poor or in any way afflicted, these too are the joys and hopes, the griefs and anxieties of the followers of Christ. Nothing genuinely human fails to raise an echo in their hearts.”

What is “Ministry”?

- **Ministry** in the Church depends on our particular vocation in the Church.
- Vocations:
 - Lay (single or married); plural “Laity”
 - Ordained (Deacons, Priests, Bishops)
 - Religious (Sisters, Brothers)

Formal Definitions

- **Church ministry** is ministry of word, sacrament, and pastoral guidance which belongs properly to the ordained bishops, priests, and deacons, but which may be shared by the laity and religious.
- **Lay apostolate** includes the broad and varied activities by which the laity reach into every sector of human existence.
 - This is the **most fruitful way** to Christianize the environment and culture and transform society for the better.

“Apostolate” defined...

- The work of an apostle, not only of the first followers of Christ but of all the faithful who carry on the original mission entrusted by the Savior to the twelve to "make disciples of all nations" (Matthew 28:19).
- The apostolate belongs essentially to the order of grace.
- Its purpose is not temporal welfare, however noble, but to bring people to the knowledge and love of Christ and, through obedience to his teaching, help them attain life everlasting.

“Apostolicam Actuositatem”

Decree on the Apostolate of the Laity

“The laity exercise a genuine apostolate by their activity to penetrate and perfect the world through the spirit of the Gospel.”

- You incarnate the Gospel in your lives to make the life of Christ attractive to others.
 - Preach the Gospel through your actions.
- Sanctify the lives of people around you: your marriage, family life, job, parish, neighborhood, nation, world.
- Invite others to want to find the Christ who animates you.

Ministry is Collaborative

Biblical image of Christ's body:

- **Laity** (the members of the body): extend Christ's redemptive mission throughout family, professional, and occupational life and society at large.
- **Ordained** (the visible head of the body): make concrete the preaching, worshiping and guiding role of Christ himself in the local community.
- **Religious** (the heart of the body): are a tangible sign of Christ's call to consecrated love.

Additional Roles of the Laity

- Help the ordained (deacons, priests, bishop) to relate preaching to real issues in the lives of people.
- Expand pastoral care to pressing concerns in society.
- Cooperate in explicit Church ministry.
- Offer the example of extraordinary holiness of life.

Spiritual Requirements of Church Ministers

- Church ministers must grow in faith and moral living to help others do the same.
- They should be moving into:
 1. Greater communion with God
 2. Deeper conversion of heart
 3. Expanding the life of charity
 4. Mature love for the Church
 5. Greater consecration of their sexual love
 6. Detachment of spirit
 7. Cooperation with sacramental authority

1. Growing Communion with God

- We crave transcendent experience (remember St. Augustine?)
 - Anxiety engendered by the suppressed spirit leaves people uneasy.
- How do you spend your leisure time?
 - Make time for peaceful rest to foster inner quiet and consciousness of deeper mystery.
 - Awake early to raise your mind and heart to God, and to give direction for your day.
 - Conclude your day with a pause for gratitude repentance, and self-surrender.
 - Attend Mass frequently throughout the week to become immersed in the central mystery of our faith.
 - Develop a sense of awe, wonder, growing preference for silence, humor about small things, playfulness, and detached industry in approaching our work.

2. Deeper Conversion of Heart

- Distorted religious practice is the greatest enemy to authentic faith life.
- Ambivalence over what is really sin, anxiety over free-floating guilt, confusion over the proper approach to the sacraments of healing, and a tendency to minimize sin or deny most sin rob us of the grace to hear the good news that our sins are truly forgiven.
 - The result is duplicity of life and confusion and uncertainty about how to handle guilt.
- See the handout: “**Examination of Conscience and Catholic Doctrine**”.
- Christ calls us to be redeemed sinners who confess our sins and grow up to become holy saints.

3. Expanding the Life of Charity

- God's love is **Trinitarian** and **incarnational**.
 - God embodies community and makes Himself known to us in the flesh through Jesus.
 - Jesus is our brother and friend.
 - Through Jesus we expand our awareness of all people as spiritual relatives and future heavenly family.
 - God's love flows through Jesus to us individually and out of us into the whole world.
- God loved us first. **“We are to love because he loved us first. Anyone who says, ‘I love God,’ and hates his brother is a liar since a man who does not love the brother that he can see cannot love God, whom he has never seen.”** -1 John 4:19

4. Mature Love for the Church

- See the handout: “**Examination of Conscience and Catholic Doctrine**”.
 - It’s important to grow in knowledge of what our Catholic Church teaches in its doctrine and tradition.
 - Let’s review...
- See the handout: “**Buy These Books on Amazon**”.
- The more you know and understand, the better you can help your loved ones, friends, and community come to know and love the Lord.
 - Each of us is called to be a disciple and evangelist for the Lord.
 - Never stop learning; never stop growing in faith!
 - “**Believe** what you read, **teach** what you believe, **practice** what you teach.”

God

There is One God in three Divine Persons: Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

Jesus Christ

Jesus is one Person: a Divine Person. He has two natures: a Divine Nature and a Human Nature.

The Main Events in the Life of Christ

Conception in the womb of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Birth in Bethlehem, Presentation in the Temple, Baptism in the Jordan River by St. John the Baptist, Temptations in the desert at the beginning of His public ministry, Sermon on the Mount, Transfiguration, Last Supper, Carrying of the Cross to Calvary, Death on the Cross, Resurrection and Ascension into Heaven.

Titles of the Blessed Virgin Mary

The New Eve, Mother of God, Mother of the Church, Our Lady, Most Holy Virgin, Queen, Advocate, Auxiliatrix, Adjutrix and Mediatrix.

The Four Marks of the Church

One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic.

The Seven Sacraments

Baptism, Confession, Holy Eucharist, Confirmation, Matrimony, Holy Orders and Anointing of the Sick.

What is a Sacrament?

A Sacrament is an outward, visible sign instituted by Jesus Christ that gives the grace it signifies.

The Theological Virtues

Faith, Hope and Charity.

The Cardinal Virtues

Prudence, Justice, Temperance and Fortitude.

The Gifts of the Holy Spirit

Wisdom, Knowledge, Understanding, Counsel, Piety, Fortitude and Fear of the Lord.

The Fruits of the Holy Spirit

Joy, Long-Suffering, Charity, Humility, Peace, Fidelity, Patience, Modesty, Kindness, Continence, Goodness and Chastity.

The Beatitudes

1. Blessed are the poor in spirit; for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven.
2. Blessed are the meek; for they shall possess the land.
3. Blessed are they that mourn; for they shall be comforted.
4. Blessed are they that hunger and thirst for justice; for they shall be filled.
5. Blessed are the merciful; for they shall obtain mercy.
6. Blessed are the pure of heart; for they shall see God.
7. Blessed are the peacemakers; for they shall be called the children of God.
8. Blessed are they that suffer persecution for justice's sake; for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven.

The Corporal Works of Mercy

To feed the hungry, give drink to the thirsty, clothe the naked, visit the imprisoned, shelter the homeless, visit the sick and bury the dead.

The Spiritual Works of Mercy

To admonish the sinner, instruct the ignorant, counsel the doubtful, comfort the sorrowful, bear wrongs patiently, forgive all injuries and pray for the living and the dead.

Three Eminent Good Works

Prayer, Fasting and Almsgiving.

The Evangelical Counsels

Chastity, Poverty and Obedience.

The Seven Capital Sins and their Opposite Virtues

1. Pride – Humility.
2. Avarice – Generosity.
3. Lust – Chastity.
4. Anger – Meekness.
5. Gluttony – Temperance.
6. Envy – Brotherly Love.
7. Sloth or Acedia – Diligence.

General Sins Against the Theological Virtues

1. Presumption on God's Mercy.
2. Despair.
3. Resisting and/or Attacking the known truth.
4. Envy at another's spiritual good.
5. Obstinacy in sin.
6. Final impenitence.

Sins Crying to Heaven for Vengeance

1. Willful murder.
2. Sodomy.
3. Oppression of the poor.
4. Defrauding laborers of their wages.

Nine Ways of Being an Accessory to Another's Sin

1. By counsel.
2. By command.
3. By consent.
4. By provocation.
5. By praise or flattery.
6. By concealment.
7. By partaking.
8. By silence.
9. By defense of the sinful action.

The Four Last Things

Death, Judgement, Heaven or Hell.

Imprimi Potest:

Very Rev. David M. Wilton, CPM
Superior General of the Fathers of Mercy
November 11, 2009
Feast of St. Martin of Tours

THE FATHERS OF MERCY

806 Shaker Museum Road
Auburn, KY 42206
(270) 542-4146
www.fathersofmercy.com

Examination of Conscience and Catholic Doctrine



The Ten Commandments

- I. I am the Lord Thy God. Thou shalt not have strange gods before Me.
- II. Thou shalt not take the Name of the Lord thy God in vain.
- III. Remember to keep holy the Lord's Day.
- IV. Honor thy father and thy mother.
- V. Thou shalt not kill.
- VI. Thou shalt not commit adultery.
- VII. Thou shalt not steal.
- VIII. Thou shalt not bear false witness.
- IX. Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's wife.
- X. Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's goods.

The Two Greatest Commandments

- I. You shall love the Lord your God with your whole heart, with your whole soul and with all your mind.
- II. You shall love your neighbor as yourself.

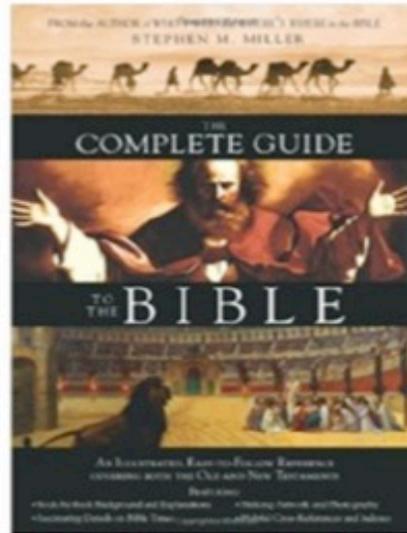
The Precepts of the Church

1. You shall attend Mass on Sundays and on Holy Days of Obligation and rest from servile labor.
2. You shall confess your sins at least once a year.
3. You shall receive the Sacrament of the Eucharist at least during the Easter Season.
4. You shall observe the days of fasting and abstinence established by the Church.
5. You shall help to provide for the needs of the Church.

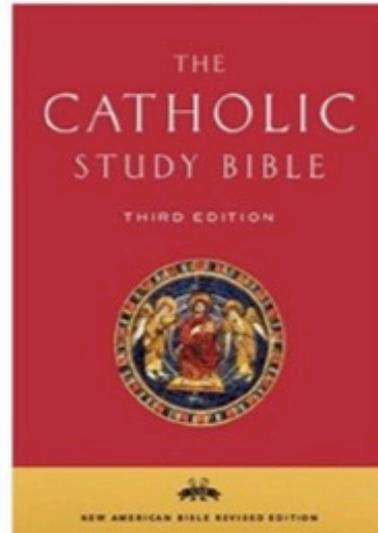
Prayer Before Confession

Come, Holy Spirit, enlighten my mind that I may clearly know my sins. Move my heart that I may be sincerely sorry for them, honestly confess them and firmly resolve to amend my life. Spirit of Wisdom, grant me to see the malice of sin and my ingratitude toward You, the all-loving God. Spirit of Fortitude, help me to make whatever sacrifice is needed to avoid sin in the future. Amen.

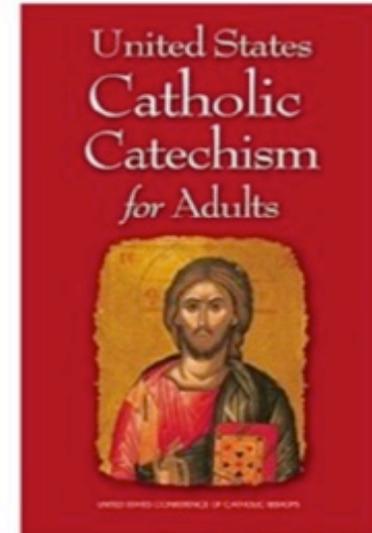
Buy these books on Amazon.com!



Paperback, \$14.29
The Complete Guide to the Bible by Stephen M. Miller.



Hardcover, \$31.87
The Catholic Study Bible, 3rd Edition by Donald Senior



Paperback, \$18.33
United States Catholic Catechism for Adults by the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops

5. Greater Consecration of Sexual Love

- We are each created in God's image.
- Each person in body, mind, and spirit is sacred to the Lord.
- Our bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit in which our eternal soul dwells during our earthly life.
- We are called to be countercultural witnesses of the sanctity of life and the preciousness of each human being without exception.
- Our moral and physical faithfulness to our state in life (single, married, ordained) is witness to our love of God.
 - Chastity, as single.
 - Faithful, as married.
 - Celibate, as ordained or professed.

6. Seeking Detachment in Life

- The call to be **poor in spirit**.
 - Adopting the mind and heart of Jesus Christ.
 - Simplicity of life.
 - Not destitution.
 - Generosity with the world's goods.
- Stewardship of time, talent, and treasure.
 - Use **tithing of income** to parish and charities as a regular spiritual practice.
 - Give your **time and talents** willingly to the Church and charitable causes as the need arises.

7. Cooperation with Sacramental Authority

- Obedience in a Church minister is a virtue and a necessity.
 - Jesus was obedient to his Father's will in all matters, even to his death.
 - Jesus desired to seek out and fulfill his Father's plan for him and the world.
 - Jesus taught us to pray, "Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven."
 - We are the agents of change that enable God's will to be done through our obedience to God manifested in legitimate Church and civil authority.
 - Every Christian is obligated to cooperate with civil authority, "since all government comes from God" and "anyone who resists authority is rebelling against God's decision." – Romans 13:1-2.
- There are also expectations for rulers and those in authority to be conscious of their accountability before God to make wise decisions.

Discover Your Motivational Spiritual Gifts

- See the questionnaire by this title.
- Complete the questionnaire.
- Transfer your scores to the matrix.
- See which 3 gifts score the highest.
- Read what it says about you.
- Prepare to share your results with one other person.
- Ask what this means in light of your current ministerial duties.

Name _____

DISCOVERING YOUR MOTIVATIONAL SPIRITUAL GIFTS

*A Questionnaire for
Finding Your Effective Ministry
at Home, Work and Church*

Developed by
Lawrence F. Selig, D.Min.

Third Edition © 1991 by Lawrence F. Selig. All rights reserved. Reproduction strictly prohibited. Additional copies are available from Adult Discipleship Office, Mt. Lebanon United Presbyterian Church, 255 Washington Road, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania 15216 (412-531-3387).

Questions & Answers?

Next Steps...

1. Pray in thanksgiving to God for calling you to serve Him in Church ministry.
2. Make a thorough examination of conscience, and go to Confession.
3. Consider the results of the Spiritual Gifts questionnaire and determine if you need to stay or move into a new ministry to serve God best.
4. Buy the recommended books and thoroughly read them.
5. Pray and act daily as a truly disciple of Christ by manifesting His love to every person you meet.

Closing Prayer

Thank you for listening!

God Bless You!