



HIGHLIGHTS FOR TALK 8

HOW CAN I DO GOD'S WILL BY LOVING HIM AND OTHERS?

- ❖ “God is love” (1 Jn 4:8). He is All-Holy, All-Mighty, and All-Knowing -- perfect goodness, unchangeable, infinitely just and merciful. As His creatures, we are bound to respond to His perfect love with love of our own that is true.
- ❖ Love of God is expressed in acts of faith, hope, and charity. These three “theological” virtues were infused into our souls at Baptism along with sanctifying grace. It is our duty to develop these virtues by receiving the sacraments often and by making acts of faith, hope, and love through prayer and works of mercy.
- ❖ We have to be vigilant about nourishing and protecting our Christian faith so that we can effectively pass it on to others. We must understand that the Church, with the Holy Spirit’s guidance, always teaches what is true in matters of faith and morals (i.e. “facts and acts”). Therefore, we can wholeheartedly trust her and should study her doctrine to better understand the truth. God does not expect or ask all of us to become preachers, but He does expect us all to live and defend the truth in our homes and among our relatives and friends.
- ❖ Hope is the virtue by which we desire heaven as our ultimate good. Hope gives us the grace to rely, not on ourselves, but on God to help us attain the good for which we are destined. If we rely too much on ourselves, we become prone to sins against hope such as presumption and despair. Presumption is a false confidence that God will save us regardless of our behavior. On the other hand, despair is loss of hope for one’s own salvation, which can cause undue anxiety about death.
- ❖ Charity (or love) is the greatest of all virtues. Since love demands a full investment of self -- i.e. a total commitment to serving God and others -- we have to fight against its main threat, which is pride.
- ❖ The devil often begins leading us away from God indirectly by inciting us to forget about loving Him through ordinary acts of piety and virtue. This covert danger to charity (which can lead to pride) is called “lukewarmness”, or indifference. Because it can go unnoticed, lukewarmness is often referred to as “the devil in disguise”.
- ❖ When we examine our consciences, we would do well to consider aspects of our lives that display indifference. Here are some things to watch out for in the fight against indifference: giving in to laziness; wasting time; comfort seeking; omitting acts of piety; giving in to discouragement; tolerance of venial sin; failure to struggle to improve; always needing “compensation”; chronic complaining; judgment of neighbors; holding grudges or refusing to forgive; failing to defend the truth; and neglecting occasions of loving God.
- ❖ A necessary means of developing and strengthening our love for God is prayer. We should place God at the center and summit of everything in our lives. Throughout the day, we can have intimate conversations with Him through mental prayer -- by communicating to Him our worries, joys, failures, successes, ambitions, and needs, while making acts of thanksgiving, love, and reparation. We can also devote quality time each day to vocal prayer -- e.g. by saying the *Rosary*, or by reciting brief prayers called aspirations (e.g. “Jesus, I love you”). Above all,



Moms Transmit the Faith

we can make the effort to attend Holy Mass as often as possible, even on days when Mass attendance is not required like it is on Sundays and on holy days of obligation.

- ❖ Work is an essential part of God's plan for mankind. Even before they fell to sin, our first parents did work in the Garden of Eden. We give glory to God when we take our work seriously and do it well. Work that is done well out of love for God builds virtue and strengthens character. As a key element of any vocation, work enables us to discover the truth about ourselves and grow closer to God in the process.
- ❖ Mothers (like all other people) are called to carry out God's Will and strive for holiness in the normal circumstances of their everyday lives. Our Lord relies on us to be the "salt of the earth" (Mt 5:13) by bringing out what is good in all human endeavors. If we can learn to embrace and love the world like the early Christians did, we will help to make it better.
- ❖ The fundamental basis of the Christian spiritual life is our "divine filiation" -- i.e. that we are sons and daughters of God. Saying so is not just a cheerful sentiment; our divine filiation is real. Through Baptism, we have been incorporated into Christ's Mystical Body (the Church), and have thereby become adopted children of God. We can approach Him with child-like confidence, knowing that our prayers will be answered in the best way for us, and that our loving Father takes great joy in us when we strive to be faithful to Him.
- ❖ It is said that discouragement and worry are the biggest obstacles to developing consistency in the spiritual life. Yet with a humble sporting attitude and clear confidence in God's love for us, we can make progress in building our love of God and neighbor.
- ❖ The "universal call to holiness" speaks to all the world. Everyone, no matter who it is, came from God and is meant for God. Regardless of temperament, personality, or circumstance, all men and women everywhere are responsible for obeying God's law and for loving Him so that they may receive eternal salvation.