



**Five Important Spiritual Thoughts from the Liturgy of the Word
...and follow up for the Secular Franciscan
November 10 – November 16**

1 -- "Behold, the Kingdom of God is among you." (Lk 17:21)**

Extended meditation:

When Christian people are asked about the most important thing that Jesus said while on earth, they usually refer to virtues such as love, peace, forgiveness, etc. But upon study of Jesus's words, the most important image that Jesus used was the image of the Kingdom of God.

It seems that what Jesus wanted most of all during his ministry here on earth is to establish this Kingdom of God. According to the Catechism, that Kingdom refers to what will happen with we cooperate with the grace of the Spirit to make everything holy in our society and culture, culminating in the eternal life that Jesus promised.

It did not work out that way, of course, because of the opposition that Jesus faced during his ministry. But he did begin the process, and it has continued over the ages to be known as the Church. It should be the Church's goal to bring everyone to cooperate with the Spirit, and consequently enjoy both a holy life here and eternal life hereafter.

But has the Church done that? And in particular have we cooperated in bringing about such an end.

This allegory about the Church should lead us to understand our role a little more.

On a dangerous seacoast where shipwrecks often occur there was once a crude little lifesaving station. The building was just a hut, and there was only one boat, but the few devoted members kept a constant watch over the sea, and with no thought for themselves, went out day and night tirelessly searching for the lost. This wonderful little station saved many lives, so that it became famous.

Some of those who were saved, and various others in the surrounding area, wanted to become associated with the station and give of their time and money for the support of its work. New boats were bought and new crews trained. The little lifesaving station grew.

Presently, some members became unhappy that the building was so crude, so simple. Gradually, beds replaced cots and good furniture appeared in the enlarged building.

The station itself came to be decorated beautifully, and was used as a club. The members became less interested in going to sea on lifesaving missions, so lifeboat crews were hired to do that

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work, especially when the people whose lives were saved were people who were different from the people of the station.

Soon, there was a split in the club membership. Those members who wanted lifesaving to be its primary purpose were voted down by the others. They were told that if they wanted to save lives, they could begin their own station down the coast—which they did.

As the years went by, the new station experienced the same changes that had occurred in the old. It evolved into a club, and yet another lifesaving station was founded.

History continued to repeat itself, and *if you visit the seacoast today, you will find a number of exclusive clubs along the shore.*

Shipwrecks are still frequent in those waters, but most of the people drown.

We are part of the Kingdom of God, the “life-saving station” that Jesus established. Perhaps we should be better “life-savers” than we are.

2 – “When the Son of Man comes, will he find faith on earth?” (Lk 18:8)**

...How strong is my faith?

3 -- “Lord, please let me see.” (Lk 18:41)**

...What should I see in the sense of what the Lord wants for me to understand in my life?

4 – “Day and night they do not stop exclaiming: ‘Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God almighty.’” (Rev 4:8)

...Do I spend time of praise to God, for example, for creation, for my living, for the great things in my life?

5 – “‘Well done, good servant! You have been faithful in this very small matter.’” (Lk 19:17)

...Am I as faithful as I should be in my spiritual activities?