

**Holy Gospel of Jesus Christ according to Saint Mark 8: 11-13.**

The Pharisees came forward and began to argue with Jesus, seeking from him a sign from heaven to test him. He sighed from the depth of his spirit and said, "Why does this generation seek a sign? Amen, I say to you, no sign will be given to this generation." Then he left them, got into the boat again, and went off to the other shore.

Mark 8: 11-13**Introductory Prayer:**

Lord, I can be so cold to your saving presence as I hurry about living the moment and becoming so sufficient unto myself. There is little wonder that I find it hard to bring myself to prayer—to use faith to know you, divine love to live in you, and theological hope to trust in you. I approach you now, wanting only to be a more faithful disciple of your Kingdom.

Petition:

Lord, grant me to seek you out in this prayer today with a faith that will console your heart and allow me to mature in my commitment to you.

1. Sending Christ away:

G. K. Chesterton once asserted, "The Christian ideal has not been tried and found wanting; it has been found difficult and left untried." Jesus truly loves us and would never refuse a humble soul the true goods he needs for fulfillment and salvation. If our wants, like those of the Pharisees, end up leaving God silent and our spiritual life cold, it may be a call for us to purify our hearts of the remaining dregs of our self-centered life. We should carefully avoid the attitudes and words that repel Christ. Christ will not let himself be loved for who he is not, and he will not indulge the desires we have for who we are not. We may want our happiness to be many things, but Christ wants us to accept that his will is the heart of our fulfillment.

2. Prayer Is My Daily Breath of Air for the Soul:

Jesus speaks with our souls in a language that flows from supernatural attitudes of faith, hope and love. He will remain silent, however, if we drag him down to the small, narrow

framework of our reason and calculations —wanting to "figure it out for ourselves" before we will act. Jesus does not want to be Superman, who comes into our lives only when things are really bad and all is lost. Rather, Christ intervenes because he wants a life of communion and grace day after day, sharing his life with each and every soul. He wants our living in fidelity and childlike trust to be like breathing the air.

3. The Signs That Bring Christ to Us:

Christ gave us signs of his daily presence in our lives. The first is the sign of the cross. Only faith will unlock its mystery and bring us to the encounter between our sin and God's mercy. Sin is at the heart of the worst that can go wrong with our life; the sign of the Crucified One is its cure. Faith will permit us, as it did the good thief, to see Christ's love at the center of the universe and the world being drawn towards it as if into a vortex. Another sign he left us is the Eucharist. It is the most powerful sign because it contains the author of the sign himself. Christ humbles himself to stay with us at all costs. Under the appearance of bread and wine, he reveals what he wants to be for our souls. Under the veil of the sacrament, we learn to encounter Christ personally as pure love. "On the night he was betrayed he showed the depth of his love..." Let these signs be the "love language" by which we talk to Christ in the way he wants to be known, loved, and adored.

Conversation with Christ:

Christ, let my prideful demands melt away before a mature encounter with your divine love. Keep my immaturity from impeding the expansion of your Kingdom; rather, let me humbly accept my need to change the way I relate to your true plan for my life.

Resolution:

Today I will spend time acknowledging and thanking Jesus for the love he has given me, and serve.