

**Holy Gospel of Jesus Christ according to Saint Matthew 7:6, 12-14.**

Jesus said to his disciples: "Do not give what is holy to dogs, or throw your pearls before swine, lest they trample them underfoot, and turn and tear you to pieces. "Do to others whatever you would have them do to you. This is the Law and the Prophets. Enter through the narrow gate; for the gate is wide and the road broad that leads to destruction, and those who enter through it are many. How narrow the gate and constricted the road that leads to life. And those who find it are few."

Matthew 7:6, 12-14.**Introductory Prayer:**

I believe in the power of prayer, Lord. This time spent with you is the most important time of my day. Let me be confident of your presence and your love, in order to take full advantage of these privileged moments.

Petition:

Lord, help me appreciate better the beauty of the Christian faith.

1. Our True Values:

We take great care to guard what is most valuable to us, right? The truth is, we often take great risks with what is most precious. We say we value life and limb, but think nothing of speeding in heavy traffic. We say we want to get to heaven, but we dabble in sin, even serious sin, almost daily. We surf racy Web sites. We cut down people in office gossip. We close our hearts to the needy. We habitually vote for politicians who defend abortion. We take sin oh-so-lightly. Likewise, we might let the holy things of our faith languish. We might neglect the sacrament of reconciliation. We receive Communion unworthily. We stay silent when a relative brags about using contraception. We do nothing when a child withdraws into the world of Internet for five hours a day. Is there something about which I should be speaking up?

2. Do unto Others:

To decide what to do in any given situation, we can ask ourselves how we would like to

be treated. "For the measure with which you measure will in return be measured out to you" (Luke 6:38). The respect we have for ourselves is often reflected in the respect we show others. Rudeness, indifference and irritability toward others bespeak a problem in us. The Golden Rule isn't just for others; it is also to guard our own dignity. Are there people toward whom I am routinely uncharitable? Do I realize that this lack of charity can hurt my character more than it hurts their feelings?

3. The Broad Road and the Narrow Gate:

Modernity is like a 24/7 convenience store. We can get anything, anytime. We can end up thinking that everything about life should be easy, be it marriage, self-discipline or even our salvation. The illusion of ease shouldn't fool us. Working toward our salvation is hard work. Original sin left a deep mark on all of us. Struggling toward salvation takes prayer, sacrifice and constant vigilance. Do I sense that the living of my faith in today's world is easy? If so, I'm probably not living it well. Where have I avoided the narrow road of holiness? Am I too attached to food, clothes or the opinions of others?

Conversation with Christ:

Help me to see, Lord, that my real dignity lies in treating others well, and in renouncing my disordered passions. Let me shake off mediocrity in my spiritual life and make the most of the time you give me.

Resolution:

Today, I will make a special sacrifice for a loved one.