



SAINT PAUL
Evangelization Institute

Basic Evangelization Training

Course 6: "Be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect": Imitating God in the Work of Evangelization

6.8 Practical Activity

Take some silent time before the Blessed Sacrament in the Church or in a favorite prayer spot to pray over the following passage of scripture:

When a large crowd gathered, with people from one town after another journeying to him, Jesus spoke in a parable. "A sower went out to sow his seed. And as he sowed, some seed fell on the path and was trampled, and the birds of the sky ate it up. Some seed fell on rocky ground, and when it grew, it withered for lack of moisture. Some seed fell among thorns, and the thorns grew with it and choked it. And some seed fell on good soil, and when it grew, it produced fruit a hundredfold." After saying this, he called out, "Whoever has ears to hear ought to hear." Then his disciples asked him what the meaning of this parable might be. He answered, "Knowledge of the mysteries of the kingdom of God has been granted to you; but to the rest, they are made known through parables so that 'they may look but not see, and hear but not understand.' This is the meaning of the parable. The seed is the word of God. Those on the path are the ones who have heard, but the devil comes and takes away the word from their hearts that they may not believe and be saved. Those on rocky ground are the ones who, when they hear, receive the word with joy, but they have no root; they believe only for a time and fall away in time of trial. As for the seed that fell among thorns, they are the ones who have heard, but as they go along, they are choked by the anxieties and riches and pleasures of life, and they fail to produce mature fruit. But as for the seed that fell on rich soil, they are the ones who, when they have heard the word, embrace it with a generous and good heart, and bear fruit through perseverance.

Introduction: I place myself in the presence of God. I then ask God the Father, in the name of His son Jesus, to send the Holy Spirit upon me during this time of prayer, to make it a work of His grace and a time to bear the fruit that He longs to bear in me. I pray for this grace: for wisdom, clarity and understanding about my own relationship with Him, how I bring the Gospel of Jesus His son to others, and what the Lord is asking me to do in the life of faith and work of evangelization.

I begin this time of prayer with an Our Father, Hail Mary, and Glory be or another prayer written by a saint or taken from scripture that speaks to your heart.

Considerations:

- 1) **Seed on the path:** In what ways do I put up obstacles to the Lord working in my life in the way I live out my faith day to day? In what ways am I neglectful or duplicitous in my relationship with Jesus and could give scandal to others? How may they be turned away from the Church by my words, actions, or manner of life?
- 2) **Seed on rocky ground:** In what ways have I yet to surrender my life to Christ and have become complacent and prideful in my faith? Are there areas of the Gospel or teachings of the Church that I particularly struggle with accepting in my own life? Why do I struggle to accept these aspects of faith? Do I try to live out my faith daily by participating in the sacraments, seeking conversion, daily prayer, as well as spiritual reading?

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- 3) **Seed among thorns:** What are concerns, fears, anxieties, and pressures that I face from others or that I place on myself in my own life of faith? What strategies do I utilize in my relationships with others in the realm of evangelization that may not be bearing fruit in my life or other people's lives but rather push them away or water down the Gospel in such a way that I don't let Jesus speak?
- 4) **Seed that bears fruit:** What are the graces, fruits, and blessings that Jesus has given me in my life through my faith? In what ways has He called me, spoken to me, healed me, and drawn me into the love of His Sacred Heart and the heart of His Church? In what ways has He blessed, strengthened, and called me to help others bear fruit in faith, hope, and love?

Meditation: Out of the considerations, see where the Lord is speaking to you in prayer and spend time with what He places on your heart. From this time, ask him for the grace you need and make a resolution in your life, whether it is in the way you live out your faith and share it with others. If needed after this time of prayer, speak to a priest, a spiritual advisor, or a close friend to help you discern the fruits of this prayer time and to implement your resolution.

Conclusion: Thank the Lord for His blessings and love and end this time of prayer as you began it with an Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory Be, or another prayer written by a saint or taken from scripture that speaks to your heart.

When you are ready, post in the Community Forums about your experience doing this practical activity. There is a specific topic created for this. Also, give a constructive question or comment about the lesson, or somebody else's post on their experience doing the practical activity. All of this is required for your *Theology of Evangelization* certificate of completion!