



WEEK THREE

SPF: Say Prayers Frequently--and Read the Bible too!

Welcome back, families! We will focus the next two weeks on our God-given talents and the role they play in our "going forth." Add the following passage from Psalm 34 to your family prayers this week:

*I will bless the LORD at all times;
His praise shall continually be in my mouth.
My soul shall make its boast in the LORD;
The humble shall hear of it and be glad.*

*Oh, magnify the LORD with me,
And let us exalt His name together.
I sought the LORD, and He heard me,
And delivered me from all my fears.
They looked to Him and were radiant,
And their faces were not ashamed.*

*This poor man cried out, and the LORD heard him,
And saved him out of all his troubles.*

*The angel of the LORD encamps all around those who fear Him,
And delivers them.*

*Oh, taste and see that the LORD is good;
Blessed is the man who trusts in Him!*

-Psalm 34:1-8

As a family, go over the following scriptural passage and discuss the questions that follow (if you have younger children, please paraphrase for their understanding):

There are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit... For as the body is one and has many members, but all the members of that one body, being many, are one body, so also is Christ. For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body—whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free—and have all been made to drink into one Spirit. For in fact the body is not one member but many. If the foot should say, "Because I am not a hand, I am not of the body," is it therefore not of the body? And if the ear should say, "Because I am not an eye, I am not of the body," is it therefore not of the body? If the whole body were an eye, where would be the hearing? If the whole were hearing, where would be the smelling? But now God has set the

members, each one of them, in the body just as He pleased. And if they were all one member, where would the body be? But now indeed there are many members, yet one body... Now you are the body of Christ, and members individually. And God has appointed these in the church: first apostles, second prophets, third teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, administrations, varieties of tongues. Are all apostles? Are all prophets? Are all teachers? Are all workers of miracles? Do all have gifts of healings? Do all speak with tongues? Do all interpret? But earnestly desire the best gifts. And yet I show you a more excellent way. -1 Corinthians 12:4-31

- What is the overall meaning of the passage?
- Why does the Church require many different members and talents?
- How can we, as members of Christ's Body (the Church), work together for the benefit of its whole?

LIFE GUARDS: Sts. Cosmas & Damian (July 1)

Cosmas and Damian were brothers born in Rome. They were raised in a pious family and led lives centered on Christ. They were physicians by their training and, because of their faith, God granted them the gift of healing the sick. The brothers converted many to Christ through their kindness and generosity. The brothers told the sick, "It is not by our own power that we treat you, but by the power of Christ, the true God. Believe in Him and be healed." Since they accepted no payment for their treatment, the holy brothers were called "unmercenary physicians."

The Roman authorities did not like the spiritual influence the brothers were having on the people they treated so they were arrested. At their trial, they actively professed their faith in Christ by saying, "We have done evil to no one, we are not involved with the magic or sorcery of which you accuse us. We treat the infirm by the power of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ and we take no payment for rendering aid to the sick, because our Lord commanded His disciples, 'Freely have you received, freely give'" (Matthew 10: 8).

The emperor, Carinus, however, continued with his demands. Through the prayer of the holy brothers, imbued with the power of grace, God suddenly struck Carinus blind, so that he too might experience the almighty power of the Lord. The people, beholding the miracle, cried out, "Great is the Christian God! There is no other God but Him!" Many of those who believed besought the holy brothers to heal the emperor, and he himself implored the saints, promising to convert to the true God, Christ the Savior, and so the saints healed him. After this, Saints Cosmas and Damian were honorably set free, and once again they set about treating the sick.

These holy brothers, the Unmercenary Physicians Cosmas and Damian, eventually ended their earthly journey as martyrs—through the jealousy of another physician who killed them. They had devoted their lives to serving others in the name of Christ. Adapted from www.oca.org

DIVE IN: Apostles Log

- What are the talents God “freely” gives you?
- Think of each member of your family and the gifts you recognize in them. As a family, consider sharing the gifts you recognize in each other.
- Write down the gifts family members see in you that weren’t on your original list. Was this surprising to you?

Don’t forget to share your pictures with us!

#soakuptheSON

VITAMIN D: St. Theophan the Recluse

No one who has received life from the Lord can say that he does not have a single talent—everyone has something, and not just one thing; everyone, therefore, has something with which to trade and make a profit. Do not look around and calculate what others have received, but take a good look at yourself and determine more precisely what lies in you and what you can gain for that which you have, and then act according to this plan without laziness.

