

1. Read — Read the verses slowly and prayerfully several times. Write down any words or phrases that seem to stand out:

2. Meditate — Now begin to reflect on the verses and ask God what it means and how he wants to speak to you through the passage. **God what are you saying to me through this?**

3. Pray — Respond from your heart to what God has been saying to you. **What do you want me to know?** Write down your prayer to him or record whatever he says to you.

4. Contemplate — Be quiet before the Lord enjoying His presence.

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**How is God calling you to act in response to what he has shown you?**

[1] CCC 787 [2] CCC 306  
[3] The Penny Catechism  
[4] CCC 1990 [5] CCC 1993  
[6] Council of Trent (1547): DS 1525  
[7] CCC 2611 [8] CCC 2738  
[9] Luke 10:19-20

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# Quick Connect

**What is the Gospel saying? Luke 10: 1-12; 17-20— Pg. 1**  
**What is the Church saying Past and Present? Pages 1-3**  
**What is God saying to you through this passage? Page 4**

## **Gospel Reading – Luke 10:1-12; 17-20 – Roman Missal**

At that time the Lord appointed seventy-two others whom he sent ahead of him in pairs to every town and place he intended to visit. He said to them, “The harvest is abundant but the laborers are few; so ask the master of the harvest to send out laborers for his harvest. Go on your way; behold, I am sending you like lambs among wolves. Carry no money bag, no sack, no sandals; and greet no one along the way. Into whatever house you enter, first say, ‘Peace to this household.’ If a peaceful person lives there, your peace will rest on him; but if not, it will return to you. Stay in the same house and eat and drink what is offered to you, for the laborer deserves his payment. Do not move about from one house to another. Whatever town you enter and they welcome you, eat what is set before you, cure the sick in it and say to them, ‘The kingdom of God is at hand for you.’ Whatever town you enter and they do not receive you, go out into the streets and say, ‘The dust of your town that clings to our feet, even that we shake off against you.’ Yet know this: the kingdom of God is at hand. I tell you, it will be more tolerable for Sodom on that day than for that town.” The seventy-two returned rejoicing, and said, “Lord, even the demons are subject to us because of your name.” Jesus said, “I have observed Satan fall like lightning from the sky. Behold, I have given you the power to ‘tread upon serpents’ and scorpions and upon the full force of the enemy and nothing will harm you. Nevertheless, do not rejoice because the spirits are subject to you, but rejoice because your names are written in heaven.”

## **Spiritual Reading – Office of Readings – 14<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Ordinary**

**Time** From a sermon On the Dress of Virgins by Saint Cyprian  
The more numerous her virgins, the greater the joy of mother Church  
Now I wish to address the order of virgins. Because their way of life is more exalted, our concern for them must be greater. If we compare the Church to a tree, then they are its blossom. Virgins show forth the beauty of God’s grace; they are the image of God that reflects the holiness of the Lord; they are the more illustrious members of Christ’s flock. They are the glory of mother Church and manifest her fruitfulness. The more numerous her virgins are, the greater is her joy. To these virgins then I speak and address my exhortation, out of love rather than any sense of authority; and I do this without claiming the right to censure them, for I am among the last and the least and fully aware of my lowliness; I do it rather because the more anxious and concerned I am about them, the more I fear the devil’s attack. For it is no idle concern nor vain fear that takes thought of the path of salvation and keeps

the Lord's life-giving commandments. They have dedicated themselves to Christ, and, renouncing the pleasures of the flesh, have consecrated themselves body and soul to God, in order to finish a task that is destined to win a great prize; they should not strive to adorn themselves or give pleasure to anyone but the Lord, from whom they hope to receive the reward for their chastity. Virgins, persevere in the way of life you have begun, persevere in what you are to be. For you will receive a glorious prize for your virtue, a most excellent reward for your chastity. You have already begun to be now what we shall all be in the future. You already possess, here in this world, the glory of the resurrection. You pass through this world without the world's infection. If you persevere in chastity and virginity, you are equal to God's angels. Only keep your profession of virginity strong and inviolate. You began your way of life courageously; now persevere without faltering. Seek right conduct as your adornment, not jewelry or attractive clothing. Listen to the words of the apostle Paul, God's chosen vessel, sent to announce the commands of heaven. Paul said: *The first man was made of the dust of the earth; the second is from heaven. Those who are made from earth are like him who was on the earth. Those who are of heaven are like him who is from heaven. As we have borne the image of the man who is of the earth, so let us bear the image of the man who is from heaven. This image is shown forth in virginity, purity, holiness and truth.*

#### **Cooperating with the Divine Plan – Lesson and Discussion**

*“The Lord appointed seventy-two others whom He sent ahead of Him”*

In today's Gospel, Jesus sends out seventy-two disciples to preach the good news. The good news of the kingdom of God is at hand! Jesus always wants us to be close to Him. He will always have work for us to accomplish in His name. “From the beginning, Jesus associated His disciples with His own life, revealed the mystery of the Kingdom to them, and gave them a share in His mission, joy, and sufferings. Jesus spoke of a still more intimate communion between Him and those who would follow Him: ‘Abide in me, and I in you...I am the vine, you are the branches.’ And He proclaimed a mysterious and real communion between His own body and ours: ‘He who eats my flesh and drinks my blood abides in me, and I in him.’”[1]

**Why does God want us to help in His divine plan?** “God is the sovereign master of His plan. But to carry it out He also makes use of His creatures' cooperation. This use is not a sign of weakness, but rather a token of almighty God's greatness and goodness. For God grants His creatures not only their existence, but also the dignity of acting on their own, of being causes and principles for each other, and thus of cooperating in the accomplishment of His plan.”[2] There are many times in life where one person does not need another person to help them, but they allow it for the sake of that person. For example a mother does not need the help of her five-year-old daughters to help bake a cake. The mother however allows and desires her daughter to assist so that the daughter can cooperate in the work of creating the cake. The daughter will not only get to cooperate in the work but also will share in the joy of

seeing others enjoy the cake and thus she and her mother will share in the reward of their work.

**Is it easy to cooperate with the divine plan?** At times yes; life is easier when we follow His will instead of our own. However, we are in a world that hates the message we bring. Jesus said, “I am sending you like lambs among wolves.” This world can be a scary place at times and we do not bring an ordinary message, but an extraordinary one. In speaking of the world, the Church teaches that the “world” is “the false maxims [teachings] of the world, and the society of those who love the vanities, riches, and pleasures of this world better than God.” [3]As we go out into the world, God will bless us with extraordinary signs as He did with the disciples. Is it easy for you to cooperate with God's plan? Why or why not? When we go out and seek to bring the good news to others, we ask them for a conversion of heart which brings about justification.

**What is justification?** Justification removes us from our sin and justifies us in God's mercy. “Justification detaches man from sin which contradicts the love of God, and purifies his heart of sin. Justification follows upon God's merciful initiative of offering forgiveness. It reconciles man with God. It frees from the enslavement to sin, and it heals.”[4] Justification also “establishes cooperation between God's grace and man's freedom. On man's part it is expressed by the assent of faith to the Word of God, which invites him to conversion, and in the cooperation of charity with the prompting of the Holy Spirit who precedes and preserves his assent.”[5] We must let go of our chains to sin. We must let go of the things that bind us and draw upon God's peace; the same peace that Jesus speaks about in the Gospel reading. When we do this we are really free. Because of our free will, we are the only ones who can do this; God will not force us to assent to Him. As the Council of Trent says, “When God touches man's heart through the illumination of the Holy Spirit, man himself is not inactive while receiving that inspiration, since he could reject it; and yet, without God's grace, he cannot by his own free will move himself toward justice in God's sight.”[6]

**How do we cooperate with the divine plan?** First, we must remember that we are cooperating with only one plan; God's plan. There are times when we wish to sprinkle a little of our own plan into it, but this will not win souls to Christ. “The prayer of faith consists not only in saying ‘Lord, Lord,’ but in disposing the heart to do the will of the Father. Jesus calls his disciples to bring into their prayer this concern for cooperating with the divine plan.”[7]

We must always pray. “Christian prayer is cooperation with His providence, His plan of love for men.”[8] If we fail to pray as often as we can, we allow Satan to work on us. However, by cooperating in God's divine plan, we realize that we are nothing without Him. He is the one who gives us the power to do great things. Christ says, “Behold, I have given you the power...and nothing will harm you. Nevertheless, do not rejoice because the spirits are subject to you, but rejoice because your names are written in heaven.”[9]