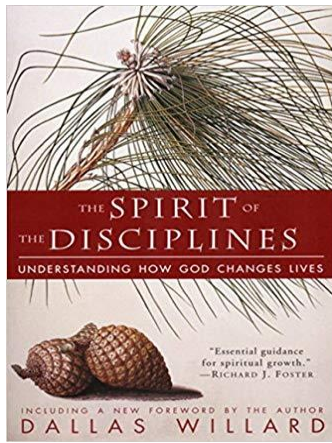


Yesterday in my homily I mentioned that the way to grow in the Lord and get to know him better is through the spiritual disciplines. That may be a term foreign to many. Allow me to describe what they are and then list a few. A spiritual discipline is a method by which one places themselves before God for the purpose of relationship and growth. Jesus practiced many of them like prayer, silence, solitude, fasting, study, worship, and service, to name just a few. Others could be celebration, service, fellowship, confession, submission, sacrifice, and frugality. If you're a reader and would like to read more about these practices the best book out there is Richard Foster's



The Celebration of Discipline. However if you aren't a reader but you are going to try to one Christian book this year let me recommend The Spirit of the Disciplines by Dallas Willard. Dallas gives a detailed reasoning for practicing the exercise and explains why they work. A better book on the subject you will not find.



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*Our green celebration of St. Patty's day was delicious and fun. Better start preparing for our next after Sunday service celebration. Cinco de Mayo May 5. We will all bring our best Mexican dish and have a great time*

*around feasting on tacos and other delicacies from South of the Border.*

I'm reading a book called Liturgical Spirituality: Anglican Reflections on the Church's Prayer. I'd like to share a quote from it with you. It caused me to stop and ponder it, maybe it will have the same effect on you. It concerns the Eucharist. Here it is

The pattern [of Christ's actions at table: taking, blessing, breaking, and giving] gives us the very shape of the life God calls us to live responsibly in this world . . . *Firstly*, mirroring Jesus' taking of the bread at table, in our own celebration of the eucharist we are to "offer ourselves . . . giving ourselves over to the mercy and to the compassion of the One who created all things and called them good." *Secondly*, mirroring Jesus' thanksgiving at the table, we are to pattern our lives on the Eucharistic prayer, for:

The act of great thanksgiving is what our lives are meant to be . . . We may follow in our lives the structure of the ancient Eucharistic prayers: acknowledge God in praise for who God is, a mystery of being yet a furnace of compassion, our creator hidden in glory yet revealed in the whole created order . . . Then we acknowledge God's holiness . . . And, as the prayer of thanksgiving develops, so do our lives.

*Thirdly*, as Jesus broke bread at table, so too "our lives must be broken in order to be shared"; and *fourthly*, just as Jesus gave bread at the table, "so we must be prepared to be given to others.

What an encouragement to remember during the Eucharist the *taking, blessing, breaking* and *giving!!*

Kind heavenly Father remind us of these things because we are forgetful and need your grace in our lives. We invite you to make these impressions in our lives. In the name of the One who ever lives to make intercession for us and you and the Holy Spirit both now and forever more. *Amen*