



**INTRODUCTION**

Talk about why most Catholics practice novenas for the dead that count not only days or months but for years. In some regions of the Philippines like in Visayas we celebrate 9-year novena to cherish the memories of our beloved dead. We offer them masses and prayers that they may finally enter eternal life  
 How about us, who are living? What do we do while we live on earth to gain eternal life?

Allow the group members to share practices on the belief on how one can enter or gain merit for eternal life.

Catholic popular religious practices include regular Mass attendance, annual confession, wearing scapular or visiting shrines and churches especially at this time of 500 years celebration of Christianity.

These practices might have been like what the young man in today's Gospel was looking for when he asked, "What must I do to inherit eternal life?" Let us hear their conversation about this and what Jesus finally says about what to do to gain eternal life



**OPENING PRAYER**

-Lord Jesus, you are the Word of life. May we open our heart to listen to you Do not make it hard May your Word melt the part of us that has become hardened by our sinfulness

-God our Father, we are your children. Help us entrust ourselves to your guidance. Let your love fill us so that we may share your love to others.

-Holy Spirit, be a lamp along our path to follow your voice and be courageous to do as you please.

Amen. Glory be



**PHASE ONE**  
**REMEMBER THE STORY OF JESUS**

**1.1 Proclamation of the Gospel Story Mk 10:17-30 or 10:17-27**

*Enthroned the Bible on a table with lighted candle)*

**A moment of prayerful silence**

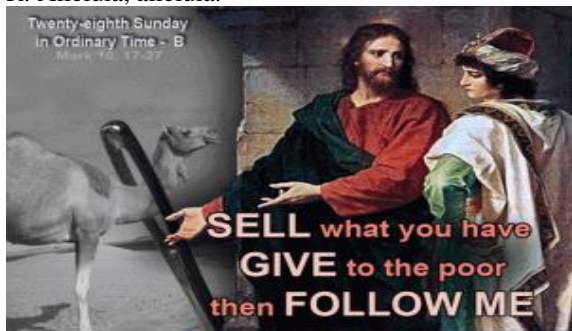
*We will not be able to understand the Word of God unless God himself opens our hearts. Let us now welcome Jesus as he speaks to us through his Word*

Alleluia

R. Alleluia, alleluia.

Blessed are the poor in spirit,  
 for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

R. Alleluia, alleluia.



*Reader: A reading from the holy Gospel according to Mark (10:17-27)*

*All: Glory to you, O Lord*

*Reader: The Gospel of the Lord*

*All: Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ*

As Jesus was setting out on a journey, a man ran up, knelt down before him, and asked him,

"Good teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal life?"

Jesus answered him, "Why do you call me good?

No one is good but God alone.

You know the commandments: You shall not kill;

you shall not commit adultery;

you shall not steal;

you shall not bear false witness;

you shall not defraud;

honor your father and your mother."

He replied and said to him,

"Teacher, all of these I have observed from my youth."

Looking at him, loved him and said to him, Jesus

"You are lacking in one thing.

Go, sell what you have, and give to the poor

and you will have treasure in heaven; then come, follow me."

At that statement his face fell,

and he went away sad, for he had many possessions.

Jesus looked around and said to his disciples,

"How hard it is for those who have wealth

to enter the kingdom of God!"

The disciples were amazed at his words.

So Jesus again said to them in reply,

"Children, how hard it is to enter the kingdom of God!

It is easier for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle

than for one who is rich to enter the kingdom of God."

They were exceedingly astonished and said among themselves,

"Then who can be saved?"

Jesus looked at them and said,

"For human beings it is impossible, but not for God.

All things are possible for God."

Peter began to say to him,

"We have given up everything and followed you."

Jesus said, "Amen, I say to you,

there is no one who has given up house or brothers or sisters

or mother or father or children or lands

for my sake and for the sake of the gospel

who will not receive a hundred times more now in this present age:

houses and brothers and sisters

and mothers and children and lands,

with persecutions, and eternal life in the age to come

**1.1 Brief Guided silent Meditation / Personal Prayer**

What does Jesus tell us to enter eternal life?

**1.2 Text in Context**

Today's Gospel of Mark is a continuation of last Sunday's when Jesus was tested by the Pharisees about the requirements for divorce.

We will notice that Jesus with his disciples starts his journey to Jerusalem which is narrated beginning in Chapter 10 While on the road an unnamed man came to Jesus. Let us imagine as if we were in the scene of Jesus' conversation with the man and his disciples.

1. What question did he ask to Jesus?

Good teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal life?

(During the time of Jesus, not all people share the same belief on resurrection and eternal life)

2. What was the reply of Jesus to the man's question

To gain eternal life, one must follow the commandments of the Law of Moses

3. What do you think was the man's reaction to Jesus' reply?

He takes it lightly because he had observed them from his childhood.

4. What are the two things did Jesus ask him to do to gain eternal life.

Go, sell what you have, and give to the poor and you will have treasure in heaven; then come, follow me."

5. This time what was the man's reaction to Jesus' invitation?

At that statement his face fell, and he went away sad, for he had many possessions.

6. With this conversation of Jesus with the man, what did he tell to his disciples? "How hard it is for those who have wealth to enter the kingdom of God!"

7. What was the disciples' reaction? They were exceedingly astonished and said among themselves, "Then who can be saved?"

8. What was Jesus's answer to this question?

Salvation is the work of God. But we have to participate with God in following his commandments; love of God and love of neighbor

9. What will be the reward of those who follow Jesus faithfully? Those who have given up everything for the sake of God will gain eternal life.

**PHASE II REFLECT the Story**  
of the Church  
(Teachings of the Church)



Our Gospel Story today brings us to three scenes marked by three gazes of Jesus. (Pope Francis)

**A gaze that loves**

The unnamed man in the Gospel of Mark is identified as a young man, a youth, in the Gospel of Matthew. With great respect to Jesus, whom he calls good teacher, he asked: *What must I do to inherit eternal life?"*

To answer the young man's question, Jesus have him recall the commandments on the love of neighbors. The young man was not surprised to hear them and said confidently:

*"Teacher, all of these I have observed since my childhood. Hearing the youth's reply, Jesus could sense his intent desire for true happiness. He must have everything in life and yet he is still searching for something that will make him truly happy and fulfilled.*

Yes. God has put in every human heart a kind of longing for true happiness This is the eternal life *that does not only refer to the life beyond, but what is a full life, a complete one, limitless.*

Jesus could sense what is in the heart of the youth- a thirst for something "divine" that he could not get alone.

So looked at him, loved him, saying

*"You are lacking in one thing. Go, sell what you have, and give to the poor and you will have treasure in heaven; then come, follow me."*

Hearing Jesus' invitation, the young man went away sad, for he had many possessions.

The man is young but he must have grown old in his way of thinking and loving. He refuses Jesus' invitation to something new. He has been observing the command of the Lord for the sake of doing but not for the love of God Have I experienced that loving look of Jesus? What does he ask me to do now? Are there things that I am attached to?

**A gaze that challenges**

*Jesus looked around and said to his disciples, "How hard it is for those who have wealth to enter the kingdom of God!"*

Jesus does not consider riches as an enemy to gain eternal happiness with God. Wealth and prosperity in life are signs of God's blessings. On the other hand, material possessions should be shared and help us become closer to God, the source of all good on earth. If attachment to riches leads us to selfishness, and away from the suffering of others especially the poor, then one cannot enter the eternal life promised by God.

Jesus challenges his listeners especially the disciples. He said to them: *It is easier for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle than for one who is rich to enter the kingdom of God."*

Here Jesus uses the image of a camel, considered to be the largest animal in Israel. *The eye of the needle refers to the Needle Gate, supposedly a low and narrow after-hours entrance found in the wall surrounding Jerusalem. It was purposely small for security reasons, and a camel could only go through it by stripping off any saddles or packs and crawling through on its knees.*

Like the camel who has to enter to the narrow door bare from its saddles and packs we also *have to detach from false riches to enter into true life...*

**A gaze that encourages**

Peter must be listening intently to Jesus. Perhaps he thought that the Kingdom of God might look unattractive to many since it demands big things. He must have asked Jesus: *How about us who have decided to follow you the hard way. Jesus must have looked with love and mercy to Peter and the disciples:*

*I assure you that he who leaves everything to follow me will have eternal life in the age to come and a hundred times more now in this present age.*

Eternal life begins in our following of Jesus here on earth. True freedom and happiness are found in exchange of depriving ourselves of goods for the love of neighbor. We give up possessing and receive the happiness of giving. There is more happiness in giving than there is in receiving." (Acts 20:35)

We have seen people whose life is dedicated to following Jesus and serving the poor, Mother Teresa of Calcutta picked up dying persons in the streets to let them feel that they are loved. Saint Damien of Molokai lived and died among the lepers. He said: People pity me and think that I'm unfortunate, but I think of myself as the happiest of missionaries."

**PHASE THREE RESPOND – with/ in my personal faith /community faith story**

October is the month of the mission, we pray for the missionaries and the spread of the Good News. Some missionaries leave their homeland serve people of other lands (missio ad gentes) while others stay in their places to serve their own people,

We may not have lots of money to give for the works of the mission, but we can offer different form of support like prayer, sacrifices and monetary contributions.

Being grateful of the 500 years of Christianity in the Philippines, what can you do to act on Jesus' command: GIVE TO THE POOR and FOLLOW ME



**CLOSING PRAYER**

Thanks giving prayer for the gift of faith and prayer for courage to follow Jesus' call to helping the poor

