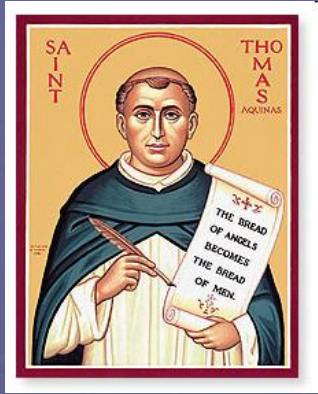


The Parable Method



What is Wonder?



“There resides in every man a natural desire to know the cause of any effect he sees; and thence arises wonder in men.”

St Thomas Aquinas [ST I, 12, 1]

- ***sense of awe that involves whole being –not just intellectual curiosity,***
- ***every aspect of body mind, and will***
- ***seeks the fulfilment of its purpose, placed there by God.***

Characteristics of Wonder?

Openness to the unknown...

Spontaneity

Questioning

Lack of fear

Loss of self-consciousness before 'the other'



“It is implicit in the normal manifestations of the human mind that we should do full justice to the given object and should in experiencing joy and sorrow, enthusiasm and indignation, love and hatred, not glance back upon our own attitude but solely upon the object towards which an attitude is directed.”

*Dietrich von Hildebrand
Transformation in Christ, P. 54.*

Beyond Ourselves

Foundation of Spiritual Growth:

Going beyond ourselves to discover the beauty and value in real things...



The child of this age engages in wonder naturally...

Moves us naturally to prayers of praise and thanksgiving...

Wonder and the Kingdom of God: Key points...

- *The mystery of the Kingdom has something to do with growth*
- *The kingdom is more Valuable and beautiful than anything else*
- *The Kingdom of God is too great a mystery to be contained in any one description*



How Do We Present the Parables?

- Keep very close to the text and use very few words.
- Invite the children to wonder what Jesus might mean by describing the Kingdom in this way.
- Resist the temptation to explain, define, answer or hurry... Wonder with the children.
- Hand over the parables as if handing over a treasure.

Parable Method

- Wherever the content of the message is an unfathomable mystery...

Jesus turned
to Parables.



Wonders of Creation Vs Narratives of Creation

Drawn to the wonders of creation...
“Creation Narratives” confusing.

- Concept of time &
abstract concept of God
difficult to convey at this age.
- Idea of God best grasped through
concrete presentation of Jesus.

What is a Parable?

Images that help us penetrate mysteries too deep for definitions and explanations ...

Mystery will keep unfolding...

Left the crowd in communal wondering.

Help us reach the transcendent in everyday life...



Guidelines for Presenting a Parable

1. Give the whole parable, not just one verse of it.
1. Use the smallest number of words possible highlight the actual words of Scripture.
2. Never explain... be a "co-wonderer"

Guidelines for Presenting a Parable

4. Convey the sense that there is “always more to find”.
5. Avoid correcting child’s responses...
encourage them to continue wondering.
6. Avoid giving your own personal testimony
–focus on the words of the Scripture.

Guidelines for Presenting a Parable

7. Children must be allowed to work their way through to an answer rather than being given someone else's answer prematurely.
8. For younger children, emphasise the joy rather than the cost of the struggle.