

## *Gift of Understanding*

I am the Way the Truth and The Light. You have heard that Bible passage many times. When was the first time you “understood” what that passage meant. When did were you able to take that passage and make it a part of you. If you have done this, you have received the gift of Understanding.

1. The gift of understanding is given to us to reveal the Lord and his love for us. Through the gift of understanding we are given insight into the Truths which we did not understand in the past, or it helps to deepen our understanding.
2. The gift is given to all of us at different times and in different degrees depending on our need. Even the apostles did not have all the truths or knowledge of what Jesus was trying to teach them. In Mark 8:15-21 we hear Jesus warning disciples about the Pharisees.

] And he cautioned them, saying, "Take heed, beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and the leaven of Herod."

[16] And they discussed it with one another, saying, "We have no bread."

[17] And being aware of it, Jesus said to them, "Why do you discuss the fact that you have no bread? Do you not yet perceive or understand? Are your hearts hardened?"

[18] Having eyes do you not see, and having ears do you not hear? And do you not remember?"

[19] When I broke the five loaves for the five thousand, how many baskets full of broken pieces did you take up?" They said to him, "Twelve."

[20] "And the seven for the four thousand, how many baskets full of broken pieces did you take up?" And they said to him, "Seven."

[21] And he said to them, "Do you not yet understand?"

In John 12:16 we learn that the disciples didn't understand exactly what was occurring when Jesus was entering Jerusalem that last time, the time everyone was laying palm branches in His path and crying out Hosanna. This bible passage tells us that at first His disciples didn't understand these things, but when Jesus was glorified, then they remembered these things were written about him,

It took the disciples a long time to begin to understand what Jesus was telling them, they had to learn how to begin to understand, and the easiest way was to ask.

- a. We too can ask for an increase in understanding when we are trying to comprehend a reading or a teaching, either of the bible or the church.
- b. It can be given without our asking, when ever the Lord feels it's time that We need to understand something.

- c. It can be given in small doses, over many occasions, slowly revealing a Mystery . The initial understanding may be on a very basic level, and the knowledge or understanding of the mystery grows over time.
3. Understanding can be described in many ways,
    - a. The “light switch being turned on”
    - b. The Ah- Ha moment,
    - c. The sun rising in the morning, slowly removing the dark of the night.
    - d. The fog slowly lifting.
    - e. The connecting of the dots.

Many times people will attempt to read a passage of the bible and they just read it. It has no particular meaning to them. They may have read it many times, and it didn't have any particular meaning to them. Then one day you read the same passage and something jumps out at you. The Lord is getting your attention now. Ask Him to reveal what it is He wants you to understand about this passage. Read it again slowly and let the passage soak in. He is increasing the understanding he wants you to have of this passage. You may be having a Ah-Ha moment.

There may be a passage of the bible, or even a teaching of the Church you don't understand. You may have a “Light Switch moment” when you suddenly understand what it is that has been bothering you about a passage or teaching. The switch could be turned when you read something, or hear something, maybe a homily or a teaching on a particular subject. That which was in darkness, came into light.

For some of us the dark of night is removed when we finally understand the Love that the Father has for us. Many of us can tell you the day and the hour when this was revealed and we finally understood all that we had been told about God is true. For me it was in 1999, the Thursday before Holy Week. It was at this time I prayed for and received a greater outpouring of the gifts of the Holy Spirit. Until then, I had been told how wonderful the Father was, and how much He loved me, but I didn't understand that this love was for ME! Sure He loves everyone, but he loves ME.

And finally, the gift of understanding connects the dots. I experienced this about two years ago during Sunday mass. It was during the Liturgy of the Word. Father was picking up the book of Gospels to carry to the Pulpit, as he has done every mass I have attended. But this time was different.

I knew that the Gospels were the Word of God, we all know that, at least we have been told. As we hear in John 1: 1-5

{ 1 }In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. 1

[2] He was in the beginning with God;

[3] all things were made through him, and without him was not anything made that was made.

[4] In him was life, and the life was the light of men.

[5] The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.

I also knew that the priest is “ In persona Christi” when ever he is offering the sacrifice of the mass or administering a sacrament. It is not the priest, but actually Christ.

All of a sudden when the priest picked up the Book of Gospels and turned toward the Pulpit, the Light switch went on and the dots were connected, this was really Jesus, in the person of the priest, speaking His word, as the Gospel was being proclaimed.

It took many years for this connect to be made, but it has changed the way I hear the Gospel each Sunday.

I have had many Ah-Ha moments, many dots connected over the years and am excited because I know that He’ll keep revealing what it is I need to know, when the time is ripe for me to know it. If you aren’t sure if you have ever had one of those moments, ask the Holy Spirit to reveal to you when He gave you that gift of Understanding but did not recognize it.

O Holy Spirit, the giver of all good gifts, please give me an increase in understanding, reveal to me in your word and the teachings of the Church all that the Lord has stored up for me to learn. I look forward to increasing my knowledge and wonder of You O’Lord, and never to stop being amazed at all you have to offer me.

Amen and thank you,