

Heart of the World L

For the last few of weeks we have been considering the practical advice that our Blessed Mother has given us at Medjugorje—the Five Stones of Prayer, Fasting, Mass, reading/praying with the Bible, and Confession. In giving these, she is drawing on the biblical account of David and Goliath (see 1Sam 17). She compares our attempt to live authentically Christian lives in this secularized society as a similarly mismatched fight. However, just as David went out to meet Goliath in battle armed with sling, five stones, and confidence in the Lord, so must we.

The fourth stone: **the Bible** and some guiding Principles:

1) *The Scriptures are God's Word.* The words of anyone are not things, they flow from their heart. God's Word flowing from His heart shares His nature (divine, immortal, beyond infinite...) therefore it is the communication of His presence. Moreover, because divine, "it" is also a Person—the Second Person of the Trinity, the Eternal Word. Jesus Christ.

When we are getting to know someone and develop a relationship, we do not 'study' them. We talk with them and grow in friendship through increasing levels of intimacy, sharing what is in our heart and hearing what is in theirs.

2) *Prayer.* If the way to grow in relationship is by communication, then prayer is how we enter into the interiority of His Word—not just skipping along the surface, learning lots of things about Him. Pray to the Holy Spirit Who inspired the human author to help you to understand.

3) *Time.* To get to know someone, you must spend time with them. Period.

4) *Tools/Study.* It is very possible (maybe even common) for someone to be an "expert" in the Scriptures and not know God. Jesus met many and eventually they killed Him. Never be impressed with Zumma-zumma degrees and clever and merely entertaining words!

-Let Scripture interpret Scripture. Every day the Lectionary puts certain passages together for us. They are mutually informative. Ask God to show you a connection. Also, when you are reading your Bible and come to a passage where you are not sure what is going on, look up what other Scriptures that passage is read with in the Lectionary and read those. It is easy in today's internet age.

-Get your mind around the notion of Covenant and how that is the interpretive key to open our minds to the Scriptures. A Father Who Keeps His Promises by Dr. Scott Hahn is a great book for that.

-Get a "study" Bible. Learn how to use the cross-references and other tools.

-Turn off the voice of the world and listen—enough TV and radio! That stuff clutters and tires our minds. There are lots of great media resources available now—CD's, podcasts, etc. Listen in the car or doing chores or walking, etc.

Fr. Michael