



TASTE Reflection Questions
September 26, 2024

**What to Do When God Seems Distant:
A Summary of the Book of Esther**

Fr. Larry Swink

*And remember, I am with you always,
to the end of the age. ~ Matthew 28:20*



1. Fr. Swink said, “Did you ever think sometimes that the things we hate about ourselves are actually the things that God uses the most? God uses our weakness rather than our strength. To change things, he uses our sufferings more than our glories. He uses our sickness more than our health. He uses bad things more than good things.” We must remember that God is closer to us when He feels most distant. We need to trust Him.

- When have you seen God use some of these “**NEGATIVES**” for your good or for the good of someone else?

2. The King in this story was attached to this world and was a greedy, gluttonous drunkard. He was highly sensual and loved worldly pleasures.

- Fr. Swink posed the question, “Are you detached from this world and able to pull away from earthly pleasures and material things?”
- Would you be willing to sacrifice to save others? (e.g., prayer and fasting)
- What sacrifices have you made, or could you make in the future?

3. The name Esther means “**HIDDEN STAR**”, and she was quite different from the King. Mor'decai suggested she had come into a royal position for such a time as this. Esther is often seen as a Marian typology in that she: a) was a virgin who was crowned by the King, b) was humble – the lowest who was raised up, and c) interceded for her people.

- Fr. Swink posed the question, “Why am I on this earth as a Christian at this time and place (in my family, my community, my nation)?”
- How can I be Christ's hands and feet? How can I be a beacon of hope?
- How can I live my faith more like Esther and Mary in such a broken world?

4. Perhaps the most important verse in this story is Esther 4:14 – “Even if you now remain silent, relief and deliverance will come to the Jews from another source; but you and your father's house will perish. Who knows—perhaps it was for a time like this that you became queen?”

- Fr. Swink posed the question, “When do you refuse (or even resist) to do His will?”
- How can you accept life as it is right now ... in this very moment?
- Can you give an example of when you accepted God's will (not your own) and were happy you did –or– refused His will and regretted it?