

The King of the Golden City Study Edition

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Preface

The King of the Golden City, An Allegory for Children, originally published in 1921, was written by Mother Mary Loyola of the Bar Convent in York, England, in response to a student's request for instructions along with "little stories" to help her prepare for First Holy Communion. Below is the text of this letter to Mother Loyola from her student Dyonis.

Darling Mother Loyola,

I am going to communion soon and I am writing to ask you what I must do to prepare. Do write little instructions in your letters and little stories like you told me about Effie and I could tell you what they meant in my next letter.

Please write back by return post as I am writing to you a little too late.

Best love and kisses from your loving Dyonis

In responding to this request of Dyonis, Mother Loyola succeeded in writing a simple story that illustrates Jesus' need to share an intimate relationship with each one of

His children. Although written many years ago for a young communicant, *The King of the Golden City* remains a timeless masterpiece of Catholic literature appropriate for all ages. Who among us will not be inspired and uplifted when reading of Jesus' consuming desire to be personally united with each one of us?

Eight watercolor illustrations, created by John Watson Davis, graced Mother Loyola's original edition. This edition, quite deliberately, does not contain these—or any other—pictures. Readers, as they progress through this story, will form a mental image of the King—one of their own creation. As we are all uniquely created to be His, we should each be encouraged to create our own unique image of Him—an image as unique and personal as our own relationship with Him

Fr. Herbert Thurston, S.J., in his introduction to the original edition of *The King of the Golden City* wrote, "I somehow cannot help feeling that a book which was sketched out and almost completed in the early days of recovery from a severe illness, when the author had received the last rites of the Church and had stood face to face with death, must have a special blessing attached to it for all those young readers for whose guidance in virtue it was so painfully written." Let us all—young and old alike—enter into Dilecta's world to ponder the ways of our King. May the message of this beautiful story enkindle the fires of our love for Jesus, lead to a conversion and transformation of hearts, deepen our prayers, and build up the Kingdom of God.

Feast of Christ the King, 2006
Janet P. McKenzie, OCDS

How to Use the Enrichment Activities

An allegory is a story or narrative in which a moral principle or truth is presented by use of fictional characters or events. In an allegory, the characters, objects, and events symbolize, or parallel, someone or something else. By figuring out the parallel figures, the story's moral lesson can be determined.

A parable, like an allegory, teaches moral lessons except parables are not usually as symbolic in meaning. Jesus often employed parables as a teaching tool to express indirectly many of His moral lessons and unpopular teachings. If desired, older students may supplement their study of this beautiful allegory with Jesus' stories by following the reading schedule outlined on pages 159-161.

It is highly recommended that all family members read this book together orally. Children may take turns reading, or a parent may read each day. Younger children may enjoy hearing (and re-hearing) an audio recording of this book. Pro Multis Media released a CD recording in 2008 (<http://shop.promultismedia.net>) and Simonetta's CD and MP3 versions are available at www.saintphilomena.com.

General

This study edition was created to enhance the beauty and merits of Mother Loyola's wonderful story. As the study aids are many and varied, attempting to complete all of the enrichment activities in conjunction with the first reading of the book may very well detract, rather than add, to the story. Complete only those sections that truly do add to the first reading. You may choose to savor the first reading of this beautiful tale; then return for a second—or third—reading, working through those enrichment sections that seem most helpful to your family's situation and needs.

Narration

Each chapter should be narrated immediately after its oral reading. As emphasized by educator Charlotte Mason, narration is an important learning tool as it encourages children to listen attentively, increases comprehension, and teaches the art of storytelling. Beginning with the youngest, children should be asked to tell back the story simply in their own words. Older students should then be encouraged to add further details to the first narration.

Parallel Figure Chart

After the day's reading and narration are complete, characters, objects, and events should be entered onto a large chart of poster board or plain paper. This chart will list—from the beginning of the book until the end—important characters, objects, and events in one column and what each of these symbolizes, or parallels, in the next column. Be open to characters or objects symbolizing more than one thing. Perhaps it may seem to parallel one thing but as more information is gathered, it more likely parallels something different. This project should be completed as a family project. Characters, objects, and events to be deciphered

ered are listed for each chapter although an attentive listener will find more. Some possible parallels for each character, object and event are included in the answer key.

Checking the Catechism

For each chapter, several words or doctrines of faith are listed. This will serve not only as a review of the catechism but also as an illustration of their practical application. Either the *Saint Joseph Baltimore Catechism* or the universal *Catechism of the Catholic Church* can be used as a reference. (The *Compendium of the Catechism of the Catholic Church* may also be used; however, not all references appear readily in the index of this book.) An attempt also should be made to determine why particular words or articles of faith have been chosen as appropriate study for that chapter.

Discussion Topics

Use the suggestions provided for each chapter as group discussion topics to expand the material in the chapter as appropriate for the age level of each student.

Searching Scripture

Scripture citations are included to increase the student's familiarity with Sacred Scripture. Passages from both the Old and New Testament books are utilized to help the student become familiar with the location of the various books of the Bible. Encourage older students to make a connection between the chosen biblical citations and the text within each chapter of *The King of the Golden City*. Help them relate God's Word to life's events and decisions. You may also wish to choose suitable Bible verses for memorization.

Growing in Holiness

To increase our understanding of God's love for us and His expectations for us without applying it to our daily lives is like casting seed upon rocks or into thorns. Read the parable of the sower in Matthew 13:1-23. Reflect on what it means to be chosen children of God. Ask what fruit we can bear from reading and analyzing *The King of the Golden City*. Learn to live God's Word.

Carmelite Connections

For those interested in deepening their prayer life, this section provides quotations from several Carmelite saints including St. Teresa of Avila, St. John of the Cross, and St. Therese of the Child Jesus. These quotations provide helpful comments on the transformation of the little maid as she deepens her friendship with the King and progresses in heroic virtue and spiritual perfection. Older students and adults can profit from the teachings of the Carmelite saints regarding our relationship with God as well as the stages and methods of deep Carmelite prayer. Allow these saints to assist you in understanding God's love and desire for us, the obstacles to an intimate relationship with Him, and how to make true progress toward perfect union with our Lord and King.

Chapter 1

The Meeting in the Wood

THERE WAS ONCE a King who lived in a Land where the most lovely flowers bloomed always. His Palace of ivory stood in the midst of a City through which flowed a river clear as crystal. The streets of the City were of pure gold, and the gates were a single pearl each. There was no death nor pain, nor mourning nor crying within those gates, but songs of joy resounded on every side.

Very different from this Land was another, which also belonged to the King. It was a country of travelers. Its people were journeying to the Golden City, and there were many troubles on the way. The King loved the poor exiles. He tried to keep them safe from harm and to make them happy as far as he could. But to make them quite happy, without any dangers or pain—this he could not do; first, because the country through

which they were passing was not meant to be their home, and next because of a certain rebel lord, named Malignus, who lived there. He had once been a servant of the King but had turned against him, and for the hate he bore him, he tried to harm the poor people whom the King loved. The home of the exiles was the Beautiful Land where the King himself lived with all the Happy Ones who had spent their time of exile well and had loved and served their King.

Now it chanced that as the King was wandering one day in a dark wood of the Land of Exile, he came upon a little maid of eight or nine. She was very poor and her clothes, though tidy, were threadbare. She lived in a hut nearby. Whether it was the King's fancy and nothing more, certain it is that he was drawn to the little maid. He had no sooner seen her than he loved her and longed to make her happy and this at any cost to himself. He spoke kindly to her, took the heavy bundle of sticks off her shoulders, made her sit down by his side on the trunk of a fallen tree, and tell him all about herself and her troubles. When it was time for her to go, he arranged her load so that it was easy for her to carry, and when she turned her head for a last look at him, he was still following her with his kind eyes as if he was sorry to part with her.

After this, he would often come to her in the wood; and each time, she came to know him better and to love him more. He told her that if she liked, he would take her to his own Beautiful Land where she would be with him always and have everything her heart desired. It could not be at once because she must be trained to be a fit companion for the princes and princesses of the Golden City. But to comfort her until the happy time came, he would often come to see her; and he would teach her himself what she would have to learn. In the City, everyone was like him; she would have to become like him before she could live among them. He would teach her in his visits and would bring her rich presents that she might not be ashamed to be presented at his Court.

She would have to become like him. . .

One day he gave her a great surprise. He said he was coming to meet her, not in the wood, but in her own little hut, that he might see for himself all she wanted and give her whatever was good for her to have. He spoke so kindly and looked at her so lovingly, that she was sure he meant all he said. Yet she could not help saying, "How is it, O great King, that with so many grand folks and faithful friends about you, you should care to come to a poor little maid like me?"

And he said, “I loved you long before you ever heard of me, and if you will love me in return I will think myself repaid for all I have done for you and am going to do. You have nothing costly to give me, but there are wild flowers you can offer me. Bring them into your hut, and they will please me.”

She was delighted and prepared the little place carefully for his coming. The floor was only mud, but she swept it clean. She made the one tiny window clear and bright, and drew within a trailing rose that its fragrance might refresh the King. Then she went and hunted diligently for the wild flowers that he loved: the humble violet, the roses with their thorny stems, and, above all, the sweet forget-me-nots. She came home with her apron full. She was tired, for it had cost her something to get her treasures. But she did not mind the trouble if only she could please the King and repay him for the long journey he would have to take to come to her. She had heard that the treasures he was bringing her had not cost him nothing, that he had had to work hard and go through dreadful pain to purchase them. Could she ever do enough for him?

He came. Not in all his majesty as he was known in the Golden City—that would only have frightened her—but in a simple robe of white, so

disguised that some foolish people who knew how great was the King of the Golden City, mocked and said that this meek and lowly stranger could not be he.

He came. And you should have seen his smile when he saw the little hut. There was a path through the wood to it all strewn with flowers. At the door, the little maid was waiting for him with outstretched arms. And she brought him into the hut. And the door was shut.

I cannot tell you what passed between them during the quarter of an hour he was within her hut. That is their secret. But when the King came out, the maid's beaming face told what a happy time they had had together. The white robe she had taken care to

put on was sparkling with jewels—
his gifts to her, no
doubt. Anyone quite

*Come, dearest King,
again to me; how much,
how much I long for thee.*

near the door would have heard her say, "Lord, come again soon." She watched him go down the flowery path until it turned and he was out of sight. Then she went in and shut the door, and had anyone been by, he would have heard her singing for days after as she went about her work, "Come, dearest King, again to me; how much, how much I long for thee."

And he came again and again. Each time the flowery path was ready; each time the rose trailed through the open pane; each time the forget-me-nots lay about his feet as he and the little maid sat together, hand in hand.

The fifth time—or was it the sixth?—he noticed that the decorated path to the hut was shorter, and the flowers less fresh than usual. Perhaps the little maid was tiring of a preparation that must cost something. Anyhow, the King's quick eye noted the change, and a sigh escaped him. Next time he missed the flowers within the hut. He did not complain, but his smile was a little sad. After that, his welcome grew less hearty each time he came. He did not get the invitations that were once so pressing; and on the days of his visit, the little maid did not fill the place with her song. There was scarcely any preparation for him now. When he came, the hut was—not dirty, of course—but dusty and uncared for. And he looked in vain for the flowers. He did not change. He brought his rich gifts as usual. But there was no fit spot to lay them down. So he took them away with him, and kept them for the little maid in hopes of better times. And the old times did return.

The King came one day as usual—down no flowery pathway now. She was not standing in

the doorway but amusing herself within. He had to stoop as he went in, for above and around cobwebs were clinging everywhere. She greeted him, to be sure, and said she was glad to see him, but in a minute or two she got up from her place at his feet and wandered about outside.

Suddenly, a clock chimed. It was the time his visits ended. And she was not with him. She had left him alone, the friend who had come so far for her sake. The thought of her carelessness and ingratitude rushed upon her. Oh, how could she have been so thoughtless, so unkind! She hurried back to the hut to tell him of her sorrow. But the door was open—he had gone. Gone after such a visit! Oh, what could she do to make it up to him? How different were these last visits from the first in which she had made him so welcome! Could she ever ask him to come again?

Yes, she knew him. She did not despair. Not only would she invite him again, but the welcome would be so hearty as to remind him of their first meeting. She set to work bravely. The hut was scoured, and the walls were cleaned. She was tired, but she did not mind—it was for the King. And then, the flowers. She was surprised to find how easily they came to hand. They had not to be fetched from afar, for they lay thick around the hut in every direction and only waited gathering.

As to the roses, what if the thorns did prick and make her fingers bleed? They were for the King. She would not mind the pain. And he would know when he saw them that she had borne the smart for his sake.

Really, when all was ready, the hut looked quite a picture—very poor, of course, but so cared for, so bright. The flowery path was long and *Love makes up for everything. Love me.* beautiful as on the first glad day. And she so longed to tell him of her sorrow and her love, that it seemed as if the time for his visit would never come. As he crossed the little threshold under the roses, she sank at his feet; and her tears fell among the flowers. How tenderly he raised her, and listened as she told him of her sorrow, and comforted and forgave her! When she asked him what she could do to make up for her carelessness in the past, he said,

“Give me your heart. Love makes up for everything. Love me. Prepare for me in the little ways you know I like. Never mind the trouble and the pain. I have borne pain and trouble for you.”

And he showed her great wounds, which he told her had been caused by his love for her. She listened, she promised, and because she knew herself to be a little coward, she asked him to help her.

And so the old times came back. He was made welcome as before. Not that she was always as careful as she should have been. Oh, no! She was often thoughtless and lazy. But when she had failed, she was sorry and told the King at once. She knew him so well now, and trusted him so fully and was so sure of his love for her that she was not afraid to tell him everything she had done—even things that were most displeasing to him—since he was with her last. He was always patient with her. He was never tired of forgiving her as soon as she was sorry. He taught her what he wanted her to know so that, gradually, she might grow like him and be made ready for her place in the Golden City.

Narration

After the oral reading of the chapter is complete, take turns narrating the events of this chapter.

Parallel Figure Chart

the King

the country of the travelers (Land of Exile)

the Golden City

the rebel lord Malignus

the Happy Ones

the maid

the maid's hut

the wildflowers

the King's simple robe of white
the path to the hut
the quarter of an hour spent within the hut together
the unclean hut
no fit spot to lay them (King's gifts) down
the wounds of the King

Checking the Catechism

heaven
devil
grace
penance

Discussion Topics

1. Compare the relationship between the little maid and Jesus when they were meeting in the woods with their relationship after Jesus came to her hut. What was different when she began to take His coming for granted?
2. Why is it important to always prepare ourselves for His communion with us? How can the idea of the decoration of flowers in anticipation of His coming help us? (The symbolism of the different flowers as they relate to the different virtues is demonstrated well in *The Catholic Girl's Guide* by Rev. Francis X. Lasance—as well as the *Little Flowers General Guide and Manual* (*Little Flowers Girls Club*).

Searching Scripture

Matthew 11:28-30
Hebrews 11:13-16
Hebrews 13:14

Growing in Holiness

Adequately prepare for Jesus' coming in each Holy Communion. Never take this great Gift for granted! Be aware of distractions both during your preparation and during your thanksgiving time. Note that when Jesus comes to the little maid in her hut, He stays with her for a quarter of an hour. The Church teaches that His physical presence remains with us for ten to twenty minutes before the Host is completely ingested into our bodies. Be aware of His physical presence when you receive Him in Holy Communion. Use this time as a period of thanksgiving and prayer.

Carmelite Connections

1. “. . . mental prayer, in my view, is nothing but friendly intercourse, and frequent solitary converse, with Him Who we know loves us.” (*Life of the Holy Mother Teresa of Jesus* VIII.5)
2. “A fine humility it would be if I had the Emperor of Heaven and earth in my house, coming to it to do me a favour and to delight in my company, and I were so humble that I would not answer His questions, nor remain with Him, nor accept what He gave me, but left Him alone.” (*Way of Perfection* XXVIII.3)
3. The only way I have of proving my love is to strew flowers before Thee—that is to say, I will let no tiny sacrifice pass, no look, no word. I wish to profit by the smallest actions, and to do them for Love. I wish to suffer for Love's sake, and for Love's sake even to rejoice: thus shall I strew flowers. Not one shall I find without scattering its petals before Thee . . .” (*Story of a Soul*, Chapter XI)
4. “. . . until the accidents of bread have been consumed by our natural heat, the good Jesus is with us and we should not lose so good an opportunity but should come

to Him. If, while He went about in the world, the sick were healed merely by touching His clothes, how can we doubt that He will work miracles when He is within us, if we have faith, or that He will give us what we ask of Him since he is in our house? His Majesty is not wont to offer us too little payment for His lodging if we treat Him well.” (*Way of Perfection* XXXIV.9)

5. “Imagine that this Lord Himself is at your side and see how lovingly and how humbly He is teaching you—and, believe me, you should stay with so good a Friend for as long as you can before you leave Him. If you become accustomed to having Him at your side, and if He sees that you love Him to be there and are always trying to please Him, you will never be able, as we put it, to send Him away, nor will He ever fail you. He will help you in all your trials; you will have Him everywhere. Do you think it is a small thing to have such a Friend as that beside you?” (*Way of Perfection* XXVI.1)
6. “If I had understood then, as I do now, how this great King *really* dwells within this little palace of my soul, I should not have left Him alone so often, but should have stayed with Him and never have allowed His dwelling-place to get so dirty. How wonderful it is that He, Whose greatness could fill a thousand worlds, and very many more, should confine Himself within so small a space.” (*Way of Perfection* XXVIII.12)

As we first come to know the little maid, she is just beginning her journey toward the Golden City. She shows us some characteristics of the classical first stage—the purgative way—of perfection in the Christian life: a growing desire to travel the road toward perfection, the continual struggle against sin and temptation, increased interest in prayer, and the longing to atone for past sins.

Dyonis' Explanation of the Story

Darling Mother Loyola,

I have found out lots of things in, "The king and the little beggar maid."

1. The king is God
2. The city is heaven
3. The dark wood is earth
4. The little beggar maid is me
5. Her hut is my heart
6. When the king came to see the beggar maid it was like our Lord coming to see us in holy communion
7. When the people mocked the king it was like the Jews mocking Jesus
8. The flowers on the path are virtues in my heart
9. The white robe was a pure soul
10. The gifts the king gave her are the graces God gives us in his frequent visits

11. The little hymn she sang is the little hymn you taught us "Jesus, Jesus come to me"
 12. When the flowers got less the beggar maid was getting tomorrow Effie (Reference to a child who gave gifts to her father on his birthday and carried them off the next day.)
 13. When the king found no room to lay down his gifts her soul was full of sin
 14. When she went out in the middle of the visit she made no thanksgiving
 15. When she found the flowers easily when she wanted to be good. God always makes things easy if we try.
 16. When the king said he had suffered for her, he meant he had died on Calvary
 17. When the king fetched her to heaven she had died.
-

I am going to Holy Communion on the feast of our Lady of Mt. Carmel.

Parallel Figures Answer Key

(Note that there may be many different “correct answers” for any of these figures. The answers below only represent possible meanings; do not be limited to them.)

Chapter 1—The Meeting in the Wood

the King—Jesus

the country of the travelers (Land of Exile)—earth

the Golden City—our heavenly home

the rebel lord Malignus—Satan; the devil

the Happy Ones—the saints in heaven

the maid—each of us

the maid’s hut—the maid’s body, her heart (our bodies, our hearts)

the wildflowers—virtues practiced and sacrifices made

the King’s simple robe of white—Jesus’ appearance in the Host

the path to the hut—preparation for Holy Communion

the quarter of an hour spent within the hut together—the time of His physical presence with each of us after receiving Him in Holy Communion; our time of thanksgiving after Communion

the unclean hut—our soul when it is not adequately prepared to receive Him in communion

no fit spot to lay them (the King’s gifts) down—a soul not adequately prepared to receive Him or a soul in the state of sin

the wounds of the King—the wounds Jesus obtained in His Passion and Death on the Cross for us

Scripture and Deep Prayer

The following biblical passages underscore the frequency with which both the Old and New Testaments discuss the phenomenon of deep prayer:

Old Testament References to Prayer

- | | |
|------------------|--------------------|
| 1. Job 43:5 | 10. Psalm 62:2 |
| 2. Psalm 1:1-2 | 11. Psalm 63:2-3 |
| 3. Psalm 36:8-10 | 12. Psalm 77:3 |
| 4. Psalm 25:15 | 13. Psalm 84:2-3 |
| 5. Psalm 27:4 | 14. Psalm 119:10 |
| 6. Psalm 34:5 | 15. Psalm 139:7-10 |
| 7. Psalm 34:9 | 16. Isaiah 30:15 |
| 8. Psalm 42:2-3 | 17. Ezekiel 16:14 |
| 9. Psalm 42:8 | |

New Testament References to Prayer

- | | |
|-------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. Matthew 6:6-8 | 13. 2 Corinthians 5:17 |
| 2. Mark 1:35 | 14. 2 Corinthians 12:2-3 |
| 3. Luke 2:19 | 15. Galatians 2:20 |
| 4. Luke 5:16 | 16. Ephesians 3:14-19 |
| 5. Luke 6:12 | 17. Colossians 1:9 |
| 6. Luke 10:21 | 18. Colossians 2:2-3 |
| 7. John 15:4-5 | 19. James 1:4 |
| 8. Romans 5:5 | 20. 1 Peter 1:8 |
| 9. Romans 8:26 | 21. 1 John 2:6 |
| 10. 1 Corinthians 2:9 | 22. 1 John 3:24 |
| 11. 1 Corinthians 10:31 | 23. 1 John 4:12 |
| 12. 2 Corinthians 3:18 | 24. 1 John 4:16 |