

Ideas for Discussion

Wine and Oil

"And when he saw him, he had compassion. So he went to him and bandaged his wounds, pouring on oil and wine" (Luke 10:33-34).

1. Why did the Samaritan apply wine and oil to the man's wounds?
2. The wine and oil seem to have been the first aid of ancient times. The wine helped to cleanse the wound, and the oil was used to take away the soreness and pain.
3. In stories of the Word, oil symbolizes love and wine symbolizes spiritual truth. How can our charitable actions bring comfort and "healing" to those who need help or are "wounded" in spirit?
4. Think of a time that someone has helped you through a difficult time. Were they tending your "wounds" with oil or wine or both?
5. How might you offer spiritual "oil" to people?

One way we might offer "wine" to people who are hurting is by sharing some teachings of the New Church. Can you think of some New Church ideas that have comforted you in times of trouble?

6. "First do no harm" is often said about the practice of medicine. The Heavenly Doctrine tells us something similar about charity: "The first thing of charity is not to do evil to the neighbor" (*True Christian Religion* 435). Are there situations in which seemingly charitable acts might actually be harmful?