

RCIA: Symbolon Lesson 3
The Bible/We *Believe*, chapter 15.

- Opening Prayer:

*O Lord Jesus Christ, open the eyes of my heart, that I might hear your word
and understand your will, for I am a pilgrim upon the earth.
Do not hide your Commandments from me, but open my eyes, that I may perceive
the wonders of your law. Speak to me the hidden secrets of your wisdom.
On you I set my hope, O my God, that you shall enlighten my mind and understanding
with the light of your knowledge, not only to cherish those things which are written,
but to do them; for from you comes every good deed and every gift. Amen*

- St. John Chrysostom

- Song: Seek Ye First

- Discussion of Prayer:

*“Prayer is the raising of one’s mind and heart to God or the requesting of good things
from God.” St. Therese of Lisieux*

Types of Prayer:

- Personal prayer – praise, thanksgiving, petition, sorrow
- Vocal prayer – common prayers or conversational/extemporaneous
- Meditation – Lectio Divina (see below)
- Communal Prayer – Liturgy (Mass/Liturgy of the Hours/prayer groups/etc.)

Why is it important to spend time in prayer?

- Questions for Discussion:

- The Catholic Church believes the Holy Scriptures contained in the Bible are inspired by God. What does this mean? If the books of the Bible were written by men, how can the Church teach that God is the source, the author, of the Bible? **CCC 105-107, DOGMATIC CONSTITUTION ON DIVINE REVELATION “*DEI VERBUM*” 11**
- How did the Church determine what books belong in the Bible and which ones do not? Why do Catholic Bibles have more books than Protestant Bibles?
- What does it mean that Catholics don’t interpret the Bible in a “literalistic” way, but rather interpret the Bible “literarily”? **CCC 101 (article 3) *Dei Verbum***
- What is the one main story line that is consistently woven throughout the 73 books of the Bible?
- Is there a verse from Scripture that is particularly meaningful to you? How do you think God is speaking to you through that verse?

- **Weekly Gospel Reading: 24th Sunday in Ordinary Time** [Mt 18:21-35](#)

Peter approached Jesus and asked him,
"Lord, if my brother sins against me,
how often must I forgive?
As many as seven times?"
Jesus answered, "I say to you, not seven times but seventy-seven times.
That is why the kingdom of heaven may be likened to a king
who decided to settle accounts with his servants.
When he began the accounting,
a debtor was brought before him who owed him a huge amount.
Since he had no way of paying it back,
his master ordered him to be sold,
along with his wife, his children, and all his property,
in payment of the debt.
At that, the servant fell down, did him homage, and said,
'Be patient with me, and I will pay you back in full.'
Moved with compassion the master of that servant
let him go and forgave him the loan.
When that servant had left, he found one of his fellow servants
who owed him a much smaller amount.
He seized him and started to choke him, demanding,
'Pay back what you owe.'
Falling to his knees, his fellow servant begged him,
'Be patient with me, and I will pay you back.'
But he refused.
Instead, he had the fellow servant put in prison
until he paid back the debt.
Now when his fellow servants saw what had happened,
they were deeply disturbed, and went to their master
and reported the whole affair.
His master summoned him and said to him, 'You wicked servant!
I forgave you your entire debt because you begged me to.
Should you not have had pity on your fellow servant,
as I had pity on you?'
Then in anger his master handed him over to the torturers
until he should pay back the whole debt.
So will my heavenly Father do to you,
unless each of you forgives your brother from your heart."

Lectio Divina

- 1. Lectio:** Read the passage slowly, perhaps several times. Let a phrase or two catch your attention.
- 2. Meditatio:** Reflect on the meaning of the words you have chosen. How is God speaking to you through this reading?
- 3. Oratio:** Raise your mind and heart to God, using the message of this reading.
- 4. Contemplatio:** Rest quietly in the presence of God.
- 5. Actio:** Resolve to change your life in some positive way.

- **Closing Prayer:**