

RCIA: Symbolon Lesson 4

The Story of Salvation: Creation, Fall, and Redemption

† Opening Prayer: (from the Roman Missal, Eucharistic Prayer IV)

“We give you praise Father most holy, for you are great and you have fashioned all your works in wisdom and in love. You formed man in your own image and entrusted the whole world to his care, so that in serving you alone, the Creator, he might have dominion over all creatures. And when through disobedience he had lost your friendship, you did not abandon him to the domain of death...And you so loved the world, Father most holy, that in the fullness of time you sent your Only Begotten Son to be our Savior...To accomplish your plan, he gave himself up to death, and, rising from the dead, he destroyed death and restored life. And that we might live no longer for ourselves but for him who died and rose for us, he sent the Holy Spirit from you, Father, as the first fruits for those who believe, so that, bringing to perfection his work in the world, he might sanctify creation to the full.

† What is “Salvation”? “Salvation is the forgiveness of sins and restoration of friendship with God, which can be done by God alone.”

- The Catechism of the Catholic Church (CCC)

† What is “concupiscence”? As a result of original sin, human nature is “*wounded in the natural powers proper to it, subject to ignorance, suffering and the dominion of death, and inclined to sin.*” Catholics also believe that through the graces of the sacrament of Baptism, original sin is removed and we are filled with God’s life, but concupiscence, the tendency toward sin, remains throughout life. “*Baptism, by imparting the life of Christ’s grace, erases original sin and turns a man back towards God, but the consequences for nature, weakened and inclined to evil, persist in man and summon him to spiritual battle.*” (CCC 405)

- Questions for Discussion:

- 1. What is the “Story of Salvation”? Why did Jesus have to become a man and die in order to redeem us?**
- 2. What is “original sin” and how does it affect us even today? What effect does the Sacrament of Baptism have on original sin and its consequences?**
- 3. What are some ways in which we may choose to follow God or not in our everyday lives in both the big decisions as well as the routine events of our lives?**
- 4. Why did Jesus create the Church and what does He give us through His Church in order to strengthen us in our daily battle with evil and temptation?**

- **Weekly Gospel Reading: 27th Sunday in Ordinary Time (Luke 17:5-10)**

The apostles said to the Lord, "Increase our faith."
The Lord replied,
"If you have faith the size of a mustard seed,
you would say to this mulberry tree,
'Be uprooted and planted in the sea,' and it would obey you.

"Who among you would say to your servant
who has just come in from plowing or tending sheep in the field,
'Come here immediately and take your place at table'?
Would he not rather say to him,
'Prepare something for me to eat.
Put on your apron and wait on me while I eat and drink.
You may eat and drink when I am finished'?
Is he grateful to that servant because he did what was commanded?
So should it be with you.
When you have done all you have been commanded,
say, 'We are unprofitable servants;
we have done what we were obliged to do.'"

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.**