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# **O CIA Catechumenate Lesson Plans 16-19**

## Session 16: The Story Continues – The Sacrament of Reconciliation

### Overview

<p>Echoing the Mystery Topics</p>
<p>25. The Communion of Saints 37. The Sacrament of Penance 44. Sanctification and the Call to Holiness (2) 53. Sin and Vice 46. Conscience</p>
<p>The Story</p>
<p>From the beginning, God intended a family to share His life. His plan to unite all things in Christ is accomplished in His Church, through which He brings about a holy people, united with the unity of the Trinity. We are “earthen vessels” who, by Baptism and Eucharist, hold the “treasure” of all treasures. Through the Sacrament of Penance and Reconciliation, the Father gives us the possibility of restoring the new life given us in Baptism after we have weakened it or lost it by sin. God who alone is holy, chose us to be holy and blameless before Him through incorporating us into the life of His Son and sending the Holy Spirit into our hearts. God intended us to be free to choose Him. He always had the remedy – mercy – when we abused freedom through sin. When God created man, He left him in the hands of his own counsel, that man might freely seek Him. Man participates in the divine wisdom through his conscience, which enables him to discern the ways that lead to God.</p>
<p>Knowledge Targets</p>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The Holy Spirit sanctifies the hearts in which He dwells and unites them one to another, creating a communion among God’s holy ones – the saints.</li> <li>2. In the Church, the saints share God’s holy gifts: one faith, the sacraments, charism, and holy love for one another, charity.</li> <li>3. The Communion of Saints includes those baptized on earth, the souls in purgatory, and the faithful who have entered into heavenly glory. We all live one life in charity together.</li> <li>4. The Sacrament of Penance restores the grace of Baptism.</li> <li>5. Christ entrusted this ministry of reconciliation to the apostles and to their successors.</li> <li>6. The penitent’s acts are essential to this sacrament: his contrition and his confession of his sins to a priest, with the intention to never sin again and to make satisfaction.</li> <li>7. In the sacrament of reconciliation, we meet Christ and experience His mercy.</li> </ol>



8. The sacrament of reconciliation restores our relationship with God, reconciles us with the Church and anticipates our particular judgement.
9. The Christian life is one of continual conversion to Christ and growth in holiness through the Sacraments and the practice of asceticism.
10. God created us for relationship with Himself and gave us freedom so that we could love Him.
11. Sin is choosing something else in place of God and not according to His will.
12. Sin is a refusal to live in communion with God; by sinning, man summons death.
13. Deliberately choosing sin enslaves us to sin. Through sin, we become less free to do and to enjoy what is good.
14. Even when we are dead in our sins, God's mercy runs out to meet us and embraces us in Christ.
15. The debt for sin – death – could not be paid by us, so Jesus took our place to restore us to the Father.
16. By grace, God not only restores what we lost through sin, but raises us to new heights in His Son.
17. In the voice of his conscience, when it speaks rightly, man hears the voice of God pointing out the way that leads to beatitude.
18. Conscience applies God's laws to life to show us how to live according to His truth.
19. We must strive throughout life to keep an upright and truthful conscience by seeing that it is well – formed and by acting according to it.
20. When we are enlightened by the truth that comes from God, we hear his voice in the well-formed conscience.

Minor Rite or Catholic Devotion

Examination of Conscience

## Preparation for Catechist

***Echoing the Mystery* pp. 254-261, 368-377, 441, 512-523, 458-465**

Knowledge Target	Scripture References	Catechism of the Catholic Church
The Holy Spirit sanctifies the hearts in which He dwells and unites them one to another, creating a communion among God's holy ones – the saints.	1 Cor 12:12-14, 24-27; 1 Cor 10:17; Rom 8:15-16; Jn 17:20-23	766, 775, 776, 790, 798, 823, 825, 826, 1108, 1396-1398, 1971, 2790-2793, 2842
In the Church, the saints share God's holy gifts: one faith, the sacraments, charism, and holy love for one another, charity.	1 Pet 2:4-5, Jude 1:3, 1 Jn 4:7-8	173, 815-816, 948-953, 1474-1475, 2446



The Communion of Saints includes those baptized on earth, the souls in purgatory, and the faithful who have entered into heavenly glory. We all live one life in charity together.	Heb 11:1-2, 39-40; Heb 12:1-2; Heb 12:22-24; 2 Macc 12:44	954-958, 971, 1029, 1032, 1370-1371, 1475- 1479, 1683, 1689, 2683- 2684
The Sacrament of Penance restores the grace of Baptism.	Eph 1:4; 2 Cor 4:7; Lk 15:3-7, 11-32; Lk 19:1-10	1422, 979-980, 983; LUMEN GENTIUM 11.2; COUNCIL OF TRENT (1551)
Christ entrusted this ministry of reconciliation to the apostles and to their successors.	2 Cor 5:18, Jn 20:23, Lk 24:44-47	981-982, 1461-1470, 1548
The penitent's acts are essential to this sacrament: his contrition and his confession of his sins to a priest, with the intention to never sin again and to make satisfaction.	Eph 4:22, 24; 1 Jn 2:1-2	618, 1451-1460, 1470- 1473, 1783
In the sacrament of reconciliation, we meet Christ and experience His mercy.	2 Cor 5:18; Mk 2:5, 17; Lk 15:18; Mt 18:21-22	980-982, 1449, 1480, 1484
The sacrament of reconciliation restores our relationship with God, reconciles us with the Church and anticipates our particular judgement.	Rev 22:14, Lk 15:32, Jn 5:24	983, 1039, 1468-1470, 2305
The Christian life is one of continual conversion to Christ and growth in holiness through the Sacraments and the practice of asceticism.	1 Cor 6:19-20, Lk 9:23, Mk 8:34, 1 Cor 9:24-26, 2 Cor 4:7-12	1264, 1425, 1428, 1430, 1434-1438, 1472-1473, 1691, 1811, 2015, 2028
God created us for relationship with Himself and gave us freedom so that we could love Him.	Ps 81:13-16, Phil 4:8, Lk 15:11-13	356, 358, 386, 396, 1766, 1873
Sin is choosing something else in place of God and not according to His will.	Ps 81:11-12, Wis 2:6- 24, 1 Jn 2:16	387, 1440, 1739, 1849, 1850
Sin is a refusal to live in communion with God; by sinning, man summons death.	Wis 1:16, Lk 15:14- 17, Lam 3:16-18, 1 Jn 5:16-17	396-397, 1855-1864, 1871, 1872, 1874, 1875
Deliberately choosing sin enslaves us to sin. Through sin, we become less free to do and to enjoy what is good.	Jn 8:31-32, 34; Jas 1:13-15	401, 405, 540, 1733, 1865, 1866, 2846-2849
Even when we are dead in our sins, God's mercy runs out to meet us and embraces us in Christ.	Gen 3:8-9, Lk 15:20- 24, Eph 2:4-5, Lk 15:18-20	545, 604, 605, 1427, 1428, 1439, 1441, 1443, 1847, 1848, 1870



The debt for sin – death – could not be paid by us, so Jesus took our place to restore us to the Father.	Heb 12:2-4, Ps 49:7-9, 1 Jn 2:2, Ps 81:6-7, Isa 53:5, 2 Cor 5:21	598, 602-603, 613, 615, 827, 983, 1440, 1444-1446, 1851
By grace, God not only restores what we lost through sin, but raises us to new heights in His Son.	Eph 1:7-8, 1 Jn 3:2, 1 Jn 5:20, Rom 8:12-14, 1 Pet 1:22	412, 978, 979, 1425, 1426, 1430-1438, 1473, 1853
In the voice of his conscience, when it speaks rightly, man hears the voice of God pointing out the way that leads to beatitude.	Rom 2:14-16, Ps 51:10-11, 2 Cor 1:12	1454, 1776, 1777, 1779
Conscience applies God's laws to life to show us how to live according to His truth.	1 Cor 8:9-12, Jas 2:12	1778, 1780, 1789
We must strive throughout life to keep an upright and truthful conscience by seeing that it is well – formed and by acting according to it.	1 Tim 1:18-19, 1 Jn 2:24, Ps 36:1-3	1784, 1791, 1865
When we are enlightened by the truth that comes from God, we hear his voice in the well-formed conscience.	Ps 119:105, Ps 119:9-11, Ps 19:12-13, 1 Tim 3:15	1783, 1785, 1788, 2034, 2039



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# **Session 16: The Story Continues – Sacrament of Reconciliation**

## **Session Outline**

## **Session 16: The Story Continues – The Sacrament of Reconciliation**

### **Period of Preparation**

Take a few minutes to consider the merciful encounter with God in Confession. Spend some time in your journal and write down what you know about the Sacrament of Confession and what you want God to reveal to you about Confession through the proclamation and teaching of the Church.

### **Church's Proclamation**

#### **Celebration of the Word**

Ezek 36:22-31

Psalm 32

Lk 15:11-32

#### Reflection

From the beginning, God intended a family to share His life. His plan to unite all things in Christ is accomplished in His Church, through which He brings about a holy people, united with the unity of the Trinity.

We are “earthen vessels” who, by Baptism and Eucharist, hold the “treasure” of all treasures. Through the Sacrament of Penance and Reconciliation, the Father gives us the possibility of restoring the new life given us in Baptism after we have weakened it or lost it by sin.

God who alone is holy, chose us to be holy and blameless before Him through incorporating us into the life of His Son and sending the Holy Spirit into our hearts.

God intended us to be free to choose Him. He always had the remedy – mercy – when we abused freedom through sin.

When God created man, He left him in the hands of his own counsel, that man might freely seek Him. Man participates in the divine wisdom through his conscience, which enables him to discern the ways that lead to God.



## **Session Explanation: The Story Continues – The Sacrament of Reconciliation**

### **The Communion of Saints**

- The Holy Spirit sanctifies the hearts in which He dwells and unites them one to another, creating a communion among God's holy ones – the saints.
- In the Church, the saints share God's holy gifts: one faith, the sacraments, charism, and holy love for one another, charity.
- The Communion of Saints includes those baptized on earth, the souls in purgatory, and the faithful who have entered into heavenly glory. We all live one life in charity together.

### **The Sacrament of Reconciliation/Penance/Confession**

- The Sacrament of Penance restores the grace of Baptism.
- Christ entrusted this ministry of reconciliation to the apostles and to their successors.
- The penitent's acts are essential to this sacrament: his contrition and his confession of his sins to a priest, with the intention to never sin again and to make satisfaction.
  - In the sacrament of reconciliation, we meet Christ and experience His mercy.
- The sacrament of reconciliation restores our relationship with God, reconciles us with the Church and anticipates our particular judgement.
- The Christian life is one of continual conversion to Christ and growth in holiness through the Sacraments and the practice of asceticism.

### **Sin and Vice**

- God created us for relationship with Himself and gave us freedom so that we could love Him.
- Sin is choosing something else in place of God and not according to His will.
- Sin is a refusal to live in communion with God; by sinning, man summons death.
- Deliberately choosing sin enslaves us to sin. Through sin, we become less free to do and to enjoy what is good.
- Even when we are dead in our sins, God's mercy runs out to meet us and embraces us in Christ.
- The debt for sin – death – could not be paid by us, so Jesus took our place to restore us to the Father.
- By grace, God not only restores what we lost through sin, but raises us to new heights in His Son.

### **Conscience**

- In the voice of his conscience, when it speaks rightly, man hears the voice of God pointing out the way that leads to beatitude.
- Conscience applies God's laws to life to show us how to live according to His truth.





- We must strive throughout life to keep an upright and truthful conscience by seeing that it is well – formed and by acting according to it.
- When we are enlightened by the truth that comes from God, we hear his voice in the well-formed conscience.

### Summary of the Sacrament<sup>1</sup>

Minister	Required State	Frequency	Effect	Form	Matter
<b>The Priest CCC 1461</b>	In mortal sin; desiring the Grace of Confession; in need of spiritual guidance (CCC 1446)	Minimum of once a year; or as frequently as necessary (CCC 1457-1458)	Forgiveness of mortal and venial sins, reunification with the Church, cleansing and formation of conscience, restores grace (CCC 1468-1470)	Priest's words: "God, the Father of mercies, through the death and resurrection of his Son has reconciled the world to himself and poured out the Holy Spirit for the forgiveness of sins; through the ministry of the Church, may God grant you pardon and peace, and I absolve you from your sins in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit." (CCC 1449)	Contrition (sorrow), confession of sins; satisfaction (penance) (CCC 1480)
<b>Jn 20:23; Mt 16:18- 19; 18:15-18; James 5:14-15</b>					

## Reflect

Reflect on the doctrines of tonight's session. In Romans 12:2, St. Paul says, "*Do not be conformed to this world but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that you may prove what the will of God is, what is good and acceptable and perfect.*"

In your journal, record the action of God's work, and write using the following:

**I used to think... about Confession, now I think... about Confession.**

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<sup>1</sup> Steve Ray, catholicconvert.com



## Choose your “favorite” (most interesting) common error...

1. *“There is no need for this Sacrament except in case of mortal sin.”* One of the graces available in this Sacrament is the strength to overcome sin’s hold on us. When we confess our venial sins, it empowers us to turn from them so that we no longer commit the same sins again. Confession of venial sins also brings them into the light. It presses us to recognize them as sins, to take responsibility for them, and to wage war on them, knowing how ugly they are as failures in love for God. It also helps us to realize the mercy of God in our own life, so that we can be merciful to others (CCC 1458). For this reason, the Church advises us to confess our sins regularly; she commands us to confess mortal sins at least once a year (2042).
2. *“Certain sins will shock the priest or be unforgivable.”* The priest is the minister of Christ’s grace in the Sacrament. He seeks to hear your confession with the same love and concern as Christ does, so he will not withhold absolution out of shock. The only thing that can make a sin unforgivable is if it is not confessed or the penitent is not contrite. Sin is also universal; there is nothing new under the sun. The chances are that the priest has heard it before, many times.
3. *“Confession is so difficult! God loves us so much that He wouldn’t require such a difficult answer to our sin problem.”* Confessing our sins brings them into the light. “Through such an admission man looks squarely at the sins he is guilty of, takes responsibility for them, and thereby opens himself again to God and to the communion of the Church in order to make a new future possible” (CCC 1455). This process matures us—we grow in our ability to be in communion with God. The only way for us to grow in holiness is to take full responsibility for our actions and to convert. Confession is how we do this, with the grace of God.
4. *“I can sin as much as I like, so long as I go to Confession afterward.”* First of all, this attitude invalidates a Confession, if held while in the confessional. Contrition and resolve to not sin again is part of the necessary matter for this Sacrament; our confession made with the intention to go out and sin as one pleases as soon as one’s penance is performed would mean that the Sacrament was never really received. Furthermore, the Apostles warn us that those who fall back into sin after they have come to faith in Christ and Baptism are in a state worse than those who never received the grace of God in the first place. Hebrews compares it to recrucifying Christ. This sin of presumption and ingratitude can lead to a final hardening of heart that prevents final repentance. When we hear God calling us to repentance, we must never harden our hearts. Instead, we give thanks for this grace and return to Him, who is so rich in mercy.



5. *“My conscience says it’s fine, and conscience never lies.”* Conscience speaks in accordance with its formation, and an ill-formed conscience judges wrongly. In order to speak truthfully, our conscience must be formed in accordance with the law, natural and revealed. If we find that our conscience is at variance with Church teaching, we need to pray for the grace to submit ourselves and for understanding, while studying the reason why the Church teaches what she does.
6. *“My conscience belongs to me as my own. I decide what’s right for me.”* Conscience does not give us the power to decide what is right and good but the ability to discern it. The norms of our life lie outside of us, and in order to live in the light of truth - in reality - we must seek to acknowledge these norms and to abide by them.
7. *“This is what I’ve always believed to be right. It works for me.”* Harm always comes to us when we make a choice contrary to what is good. Sometimes we can’t always see the harm, but the reality is there. Every evil choice turns us away from God and into something less than the person he created us to be.
8. *“Conscience is a curse. I wish that it would leave me alone”.* Even the affliction that comes with a troubled conscience is a blessing. The pain signals that we need to act, just as physical pain tells us that there is something wrong with our body. Guilt calls us to repentance and to conversion, so that we turn from sin and come to know the fullness of life that God intends for us. On the other hand, there is great peace when one lives by an upright conscience.

## Application

Christ's Paschal Mystery won for us the forgiveness of sins and the possibility of new life which He bestows on us through the Sacrament of Penance

### Consider the six promises made at the time of Baptism:

1. Do you renounce sin, so as to live in the freedom of the children of God?  
“I do”
2. Do you renounce the lure of evil, so that sin may have no mastery over you?  
“I do”
3. Do you renounce Satan and all his works and empty promises?  
“I do”



4. Do you believe in God, the Father almighty, Creator of heaven and earth?

“I do”

5. Do you believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord, who was born of the Virgin Mary, suffered death and was buried, rose again from the dead and is seated at the right hand of the Father?

“I do”

6. Do you believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and life everlasting?

“I do”

### **Man’s response to God – the theological virtues**

Understanding this doctrine strengthens our **faith** when we see that by the Sacrament of Penance we are reconciled with God and the Church, and we move from death to life.

Understanding this doctrine strengthens our hope. We see that in this Sacrament, God provides a remedy for our weakness and confidence that He will give us all we need to persevere. We return to our heavenly Father, who embraces us and restores us.

Understanding this doctrine strengthens our **charity** when we grasp that through the Sacrament of Penance we resolve not to sin again, and we enter into a new way of life. We also see the multitude of graces available to us for charity. We receive strength to persevere.

## **Celebration**

### **This Sunday**

At the Penitential Act and Confiteor, we acknowledge our sins, and do so prepare ourselves to celebrate the sacred mysteries.

- Sometime during the week leading up to Mass, set time aside to do an examination of conscience, or arrive to Mass early to spend time examining your conscience. Ask the Lord to give you the grace to overcome your sins and to avoid what leads you to sin.

- In the silent pause before the Confiteor, we “call to mind our sins.”
- We beat our breast as a sign of humility and repentance.
- Discern if the Lord is asking you to bring any of these sins to the Sacrament of Confession.

In the Gloria, we sing an ancient hymn of praise that begins with the angel's song at Christ's birth.

- At the Gloria, give glory to God through Jesus Christ, our Savior.
- Thank God for the forgiveness He has given you and for Jesus' Sacrifice that frees you from sin for an “abundant life” of discipleship.
- Recall: God's glory is our salvation. Our salvation is in glorifying God.

## **Closing our Session: Examination of Conscience for Single and Married Persons<sup>2</sup>**

### **An Examination of Conscience for Single Persons**

#### **Responsibilities to God:**

Have I gone to Mass every Sunday? Have I participated at Mass or have I daydreamed or been present with a blank mind?

Have I prayed every day (15-20 minutes)?

Have I read the Bible? Have I studied the truths of our faith and allowed them to become more a part of the way I think and act? Have I read any spiritual books or religious literature?

Have I told God that I want to love him with my whole heart, mind and strength? Do I hold any resentments toward God?

Have I recognized my need for Jesus and his salvation? Have I asked the Holy Spirit to empower me to live the Christian life?

Have I been financially generous to the Church? Have I participated in parish or religious activities?

Have I held resentments toward the Church or Church authorities? Have I forgiven them?

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<sup>2</sup> **United States Conference of Catholic Bishops**



### **Responsibilities to others and to myself:**

Have I been rebellious, disobedient or disrespectful to anyone in authority?  
Have I lied to or deceived others—friends, boss, or coworkers?  
Have I been arrogant and stubborn?  
Have I gotten angry or nurtured and held grudges and resentments?  
Have I refused to forgive others—parents, relatives, employers, former friend, a former spouse?  
Have I cultivated hatred?  
Have I felt sorry for myself or nurtured self-pity?  
Have I engaged in sexual fantasies? Have I looked at others lustfully?  
Have I read pornographic literature or looked at pornographic pictures, shows or movies?  
Have I masturbated?  
Have I lustfully kissed or sexually touched someone? Have I had sexual intercourse?  
Have I had an abortion or encouraged another to have one?  
Have I gossiped about others? Have I slandered anyone? Have I told lies about others? Have I mocked or made fun of others?

### **Responsibilities to society:**

Have I been a Christian witness to those with whom I work or associate? Have I spoken to anyone about the Gospel and how important it is to believe in Jesus?  
Have I allowed the Gospel to influence my political and social opinions?  
Have I had a proper Christian concern for the poor and needy?  
Have I paid my taxes?  
Have I fostered or nurtured hatred toward my 'political' opponents, either local, national or international?  
Have I been prejudiced toward others because of race, color, religion or social status?

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## **An Examination of Conscience for Married Persons**

### **Responsibilities to God:**

Have I gone to Mass every Sunday? Have I participated at Mass or have I day dreamed or been present with a blank mind?  
Have I prayed every day (15-20 minutes)?  
Have I read the Bible? Have I studied the truths of our faith and allowed them to become more



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part of the way I think and act? Have I read any spiritual books or religious literature?  
Have I told God that I want to love him with my whole heart, mind and strength? Do I hold any resentments toward God?

Have I recognized my need for Jesus and his salvation? Have I asked the Holy Spirit to empower me to live the Christian life, to be a proper husband/wife and parent?

Have I been financially generous to the Church? Have I participated in parish or religious activities?

Have I held resentments toward the Church or Church authorities? Have I forgiven them?

### **Responsibilities to my spouse:**

Have I cared for my spouse? Have I been generous with my time? Have I been affectionate and loving? Have I told my spouse that I love him or her?

Have I been concerned about the spiritual well-being of my spouse?

Have I listened to my spouse? Have I paid attention to his other concerns, worries, and problems? Have I sought these out?

Have I allowed resentments and bitterness toward my spouse to take root in my mind? Have I nurtured these? Have I forgiven my spouse for the wrongs he or she has committed against me?

Have I allowed misunderstanding, miscommunication or accidents to cause anger and mistrust?

Have I nurtured critical and negative thoughts about my spouse?

Have I manipulated my spouse in order to get my own way?

Have I tried to bully or overpower my spouse?

Have I spoken sharply or sarcastically to my spouse? Have I spoken in a demeaning or negative way? Have I injured my spouse through taunting and negative teasing? Have I called my spouse harsh names or used language that is not respectful?

Have I physically abused my spouse?

Have I gossiped about my spouse?

Have I undermined the authority and dignity of my spouse through disrespect and rebelliousness?

Have I been moody and sullen?

Have I bickered with my spouse out of stubbornness and selfishness?

Have I lied or been deceitful to my spouse?

Have I misused sexuality? Have I used sexual relations solely for my own selfish pleasure?

Have I been too demanding in my desire for sexual fulfillment? Have I been loving and physically affectionate in my sexual relations or have I used sexual relations in a way that would be demeaning or disrespectful to my spouse? Have I refused sexual relations out of laziness, revenge or manipulation?

Have I refused to conceive children out of selfishness or material greed? Have I used artificial means of contraception?

Have I had an abortion or encouraged others to have one?

Have I masturbated?



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Have I flirted or fostered improper relationships with someone else, either in my mind or through words and actions?

Have I used pornography: books, magazines or movies?

Have I committed adultery?

Have I misused alcohol or drugs?

Have I been financially responsible?

### **Responsibilities to children:**

Have I cared for the spiritual needs of my children? Have I been a shepherd and guardian as God has appointed me? Have I tried to foster a Christian family where Jesus is Lord? Have I taught my children the Gospel and the commandments of God?

Have I prayed with them?

Have I been persistent and courageous in my training and teaching? Have I disciplined them when necessary? Have I been lazy and apathetic?

Have I talked with them to find out their problems, concerns and fears? Have I been affectionate toward them? Have I hugged them and told them that I love them? Have I played or recreated with them?

Have I been impatient and frustrated with them? Have I corrected them out of love in order to teach them what is right and good? Have I treated them with respect? Have I spoken to them in a sarcastic or demeaning way?

Have I held resentments against them? Have I forgiven them?

Have I been of one heart and mind with my spouse in the upbringing of the children? Or have I allowed disagreements and dissension to disrupt the training, educating and disciplining of our children?

Have I undermined the role of authority in the eyes of my children by speaking negatively against God, the Church, my spouse or others who hold legitimate authority over them?

Have I been a good Christian witness to my children in what I say and do? Or do I demand one standard for them and another for myself?

Have I been properly generous with my children regarding money and physical and material well-being? Have I been miserly? Have I been extravagant, thus spoiling them?

### **Responsibilities to society:**

Have I been a Christian witness to those with whom I work or associate? Have I spoken to anyone about the Gospel and how important it is to believe in Jesus?

Have I held resentments and anger against those with whom I work, relatives or friends? Have I forgiven them?

Have I been unethical in my business dealings? Have I stolen or lied?

Have I allowed the Gospel to influence my political and social opinions?

Have I had a proper Christian concern for the poor and needy?





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Have I paid my taxes?

Have I fostered or nurtured hatred toward my “political” enemies, either local, national or international?

Have I been prejudiced toward others because of race, color, religion or social status?

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## Session 17: The Story Continues – Anointing of the Sick Overview

Echoing the Mystery Topics
<p>INSERT: THE LIFE OF CHRIST (CCC512-560)</p> <p>18. The Incarnation</p> <p>24. The Church: Guardian and Dispenser of the Mysteries (4)</p> <p>38. The Sacrament of Anointing of the Sick</p>
The Story
<p>God is by nature merciful. Jesus Christ had an earthly ministry of personal relationships, healing, and teaching.</p> <p>God the Father destined us in love to be His sons and daughters through Jesus Christ, the Word made flesh. God is love, and he who abides in love abides in God. The life of the Church is a mystery of the love of the Trinity who dwells in her. This love is guided, guarded and up-built by the hierarchy of the Church and her Magisterium, so that we unfailingly meet Christ in her. In accord with God’s plan for us, after Original Sin He made the way for us to come into the “guarantee of our inheritance” of future glory. To rise with Christ, we must die with Christ.</p>
Knowledge Targets
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Jesus healed and forgave sins as an essential part of His earthly ministry. This reveals the love and mercy of God.</li><li>• The Second Person of the Trinity, the Word of God, assumed a human nature.</li><li>• Jesus Christ is fully God and fully man.</li><li>• The mission of Christ is summed up in the reasons for the Incarnation.</li><li>• Everything Jesus said and did was for the purpose of accomplishing the reasons for the incarnation.</li><li>• By becoming man, God made it possible for us to share His life.</li><li>• The hierarchical structure of the Church serves the growth in holiness of the entire Church. The apostles and their successors bring us into communion with Christ and to share in His mystery.</li><li>• The Church gives her children life in Baptism and then brings them to full birth by their entry into heaven.</li><li>• Christ destroyed the power of sickness and death by His Paschal Mystery.</li><li>• Viaticum, the last reception of Holy Communion, is the final and greatest grace the Church offers to her children who are “passing from death to life.”</li><li>• The sacrament of the anointing of the sick is celebrating withing the community of the Church.</li></ul>



- The Church calls all of her suffering members to contribute to the good of the people of God by freely uniting themselves to the Passion and Death of Christ.

Minor Rite or Catholic Devotion

Examination of Conscience

## Preparation for Catechist

***Echoing the Mystery* pp. 181-189, 244-254, 378-387**

Knowledge Target	Scripture References	Catechism of the Catholic Church
Jesus healed and forgave sins in his earthly ministry. This reveals the love and mercy of God.	Mk 2:1-12, Mk 6:12-13, Mk 6:53-56	517, 519-520, 542, 545, 549-550
The Second Person of the Trinity, the Word of God, assumed a human nature.	Phil 2:5-11, 1 Tim 3:16, Jn 1:1-14	90, 461, 463
Jesus Christ is fully God and fully man.	Heb 4:15, 1 Jn 4:2, 2 Jn 1:7, Gal 4:4-5	464-470, 475
The mission of Christ is summed up in the reasons for the Incarnation.	1 Jn 4:9, Mt 11:29, 2 Pet 1:4, 1 Jn 3:5	457-460
Everything Jesus said and did was for the purpose of accomplishing the reasons for the incarnation.	Jn 6:63, Jn 1:14, Jn 20:31	513-514, 521, 525, 531-532, 536, 539, 541, 548, 556, 563
By becoming man, God made it possible for us to share His life.	Heb 1:3	427, 1084, 1087, 1114-1116, 1548, 1988, 2011, 2666
The hierarchical structure of the Church serves the growth in holiness of the entire Church. The apostles and their successors bring us into communion with Christ and to share in His mystery.	Jn 15:12, Eph 5:25-32	773
The Church gives her children life in Baptism and then brings them to full birth by their entry into heaven.	Jn 19:27, Gal 4:4	502, 773, 968, 972, 2074, 2679
Christ destroyed the power of sickness and death by His Paschal Mystery.	1 Cor 15:26, Isa 53:4-6, Phil. 1:23, Rom 5:19-21	1008-1009, 1013-1014, 1505, 1523, 1681
Viaticum, the last reception of Holy Communion, is the final and greatest grace the Church offers to her children who are "passing from death to life."	Jn 6:54, Jn 13:1	1392, 1524-1525, 1689-1690



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The sacrament of the anointing of the sick is celebrating withing the community of the Church.	Jas 5:14-15, Mk 12-13, Mt 10:8	1509-1513, 1517-1519
The Church calls all of her suffering members to contribute to the good of the people of God by freely uniting themselves to the Passion and Death of Christ.	Rom 14:7, 2 Cor 12:9, Col 1:24	618, 784, 953, 1508, 1521-1522, 1535



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# **Session 17: The Story Continues – Anointing of the Sick**

## **Session Outline**

## Session 17: The Story Continues – Anointing of the Sick

### Period of Preparation

Observe... discern... wonder...

Spend some time making observations about this Nineteenth Century painting by Illia Efimovich Repin. What do you observe in this picture? What do you think is happening? What does it make you wonder about God?



### Church's Proclamation

#### Celebration of the Word

Jas 5:14-15  
Psalm 31  
Mk 2:1-12

#### Reflection

God is by nature merciful. Jesus Christ had an earthly ministry of personal relationships, healing, and teaching.

God the Father destined us in love to be His sons and daughters through Jesus Christ, the Word made flesh.



God is love, and he who abides in love abides in God. The life of the Church is a mystery of the love of the Trinity who dwells in her. This love is guided, guarded and up-built by the hierarchy of the Church and her Magisterium, so that we unfailingly meet Christ in her.

In accord with God's plan for us, after Original Sin He made the way for us to come into the "guarantee of our inheritance" of future glory. To rise with Christ, we must die with Christ.

## **Session Explanation: The Story Continues – Anointing of the Sick**

### **The Life of Christ**

- Jesus healed and forgave sins as an essential part of His earthly ministry. This reveals the love and mercy of God.
- The Second Person of the Trinity, the Word of God, assumed a human nature.
- Jesus Christ is fully God and fully man.
- The mission of Christ is summed up in the reasons for the Incarnation.
- Everything Jesus said and did was for the purpose of accomplishing the reasons for the incarnation.
- By becoming man, God made it possible for us to share His life.

### **The Church: Guardian and Dispenser of the Mysteries**

- The hierarchical structure of the Church serves the growth in holiness of the entire Church. The apostles and their successors bring us into communion with Christ and to share in His mystery.

### **The Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick**

- The Church gives her children life in Baptism and then brings them to full birth by their entry into heaven.
- Christ destroyed the power of sickness and death by His Paschal Mystery.
- Viaticum, the last reception of Holy Communion, is the final and greatest grace the Church offers to her children who are "passing from death to life."
- The sacrament of the anointing of the sick is celebrating withing the community of the Church.
- The Church calls all of her suffering members to contribute to the good of the people of God by freely uniting themselves to the Passion and Death of Christ.

**Which of the above is your muddiest point?**

**Form a question.**



### Summary of the Sacrament<sup>1</sup>

Minister	Required State	Frequency	Effect	Form	Matter
<b>Only a Bishop or Priest CCC 1516</b>	Seriously ill; at the point of death or before a serious operation or for the elderly whose frailty becomes more pronounced (CCC 1541f.)	Repeatable; at the point of grave illnesses or before a serious operation (CCC 1514f.)	Sins forgiven; grace to face trial; spiritual preparation to die; and if God's will, physical healing (CCC 1520-1523)	Prayer of the Priest over the sick person for the grace of the Holy Spirit and the forgiveness of sins (CCC 1513, 1519)	Anointing with Holy Oil and Imposition of Hands (CCC 1513, 1519)
<b>Mk 6:13; Jn 20:23; Mt 16:18-19; 18:15-18; James 5:14-15</b>					

### Choose your “favorite” (most interesting) common error...

1. *“This Sacrament is only really relevant to the dying.”* The Sacrament applies to the whole Church because all suffer with the one who suffers, although only the person who is sick receives the Sacrament. It is celebrated within the communion of the Church. Also, the Church recommends the Sacrament whenever one begins to be only in danger of death through serious illness, old age, or surgery (CCC 1514-1515, 1522).
2. *“This Sacrament is alarming and must be omitted for those who are already afraid.”* Fear of death is natural, and this Sacrament is the means by which God pours strength into our souls to enter courageously into this struggle. This Sacrament can impart great peace to the dying. It gives them forgiveness of sins and the healing of their souls. They know they are at peace with God when they receive this Sacrament. Also, the Church anoints with the understanding that God may will to grant healing to the body through the prayer of the Church (1520). Withholding the Sacrament deprives the sick person of the graces they need most at that time.
3. *“The possibility of physical healing is so remote that it should not be expected.”* As said above, the grace of spiritual healing is assured in the Holy Spirit's action of this Sacrament, but physical healing is not to be excluded as a result. God's loving care extends to the body as well as the soul (CCC 1520).

<sup>1</sup> Steve Ray, catholicconvert.com





4. *“Only ‘victim souls’ are really expected to properly offer suffering for the redemption of anything or anyone.”* Participation in the sufferings of Christ is the primary means by which God conforms us to the glory of His Son. We are expected to take up His Cross and follow Christ, and by this means, we are made collaborators in His work of redemption. Through the mystery of the Incarnation, “the possibility of being made partners, in a way known to God, and the paschal mystery is offered to all men... In fact Jesus desires to associate with his redeeming sacrifice those who were to be its first beneficiaries” (CCC 618). All are called “to the fullness of Christian life and to the perfection of charity,” and “there is no holiness without renunciation and spiritual battle” (2013, 2015).
5. *“Redemptive suffering will remove the greatest difficulties of suffering.”* On the contrary, participation in redemption is more difficult, for one must suffer well to do so. Knowing that one’s suffering has meaning eases a burden, but it is still accompanied by the difficulties of pain and feelings of futility. The Sacrament gives the strength to conquer the temptations to discouragement and anguish, so that the Christian is strong enough to bear the cross of redemptive suffering.
6. *“Jesus suffered so we don’t have to.”* Christ suffered as our example (1 Pet 2:21). He came to make suffering a means which leads to God, rather than to totally alleviated in the present life.” Apart from the Cross, there is no other ladder by which we may get to heaven” (St. Rose of Lima, CCC 618).
7. *I don’t have enough faith to suffer.”* Self-denial helps prepare us to respond generously to God when He allows significant suffering in our lives, but He never asks anything of us without giving us the grace to do it. This is why it is so important for a person experiencing grave illness to receive the Anointing of the Sick as a means of strength.
8. *“The person suffering has done something wrong.”* The person who suffers is in good company: the Blessed Mother and Christ suffered more intensely than anyone else, though both were sinless. While suffering purifies us of our faults, it also opens up the possibility of contributing to the sanctification of the Church.

## Application

The Anointing of the Sick gives us strength to share Christ's redemptive suffering, for the good of the Church. He destroyed the sting of death by His Paschal Mystery, and we suffer in the hope of sharing His glory.

### Consider the six promises made at the time of Baptism:

1. Do you renounce sin, so as to live in the freedom of the children of God?  
"I do"
2. Do you renounce the lure of evil, so that sin may have no mastery over you?  
"I do"
3. Do you renounce Satan and all his works and empty promises?  
"I do"
4. Do you believe in God, the Father almighty, Creator of heaven and earth?  
"I do"
5. Do you believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord, who was born of the Virgin Mary, suffered death and was buried, rose again from the dead and is seated at the right hand of the Father?  
"I do"
6. Do you believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and life everlasting?  
"I do"

### Man's response to God – the theological virtues

Understanding the Sacrament and all of the liturgical rites connected to it stirs up **faith**.

Understanding the Sacrament brings the peace of confident **hope**.

Understanding this Sacrament reminds us of the incredible **love** of God for us individually - prompting our own response of love for Him and for His Body, the Church.

## Celebration

### This Sunday

At the Penitential Act and Confiteor, we acknowledge our sins, and do so prepare ourselves to celebrate the sacred mysteries.

- Sometime during the week leading up to Mass, set time aside to do an examination of conscience, or arrive to Mass early to spend time examining your conscience asking the Lord for grace to overcome them and what leads to them.
- In the silent pause before the Confiteor, we “call to mind our sins.”
- We beat our breast as a sign of humility and repentance.
- Discern if the Lord is asking you to bring any of these sins to the Sacrament of Confession.

In the Gloria, we sing an ancient hymn of praise that begins with the angel’s song at Christ’s birth.

- At the Gloria, give glory to God through Jesus Christ, our Savior.
- Thank God for His forgiveness and for Jesus’ Sacrifice to free you from sin for “abundant life” of discipleship.
- Recall: God’s glory is our salvation. Our salvation is in glorifying God.

## **Closing our Session: Examination of Conscience for Single and Married Persons<sup>2</sup>**

### **An Examination of Conscience for Single Persons**

#### **Responsibilities to God:**

Have I gone to Mass every Sunday? Have I participated at Mass or have I daydreamed or been present with a blank mind?

Have I prayed every day (15-20 minutes)?

Have I read the Bible? Have I studied the truths of our faith and allowed them to become more a part of the way I think and act? Have I read any spiritual books or religious literature?

Have I told God that I want to love him with my whole heart, mind and strength? Do I hold any resentments toward God?

Have I recognized my need for Jesus and his salvation? Have I asked the Holy Spirit to empower me to live the Christian life?

Have I been financially generous to the Church? Have I participated in parish or religious activities?

Have I held resentments toward the Church or Church authorities? Have I forgiven them?

#### **Responsibilities to others and to myself:**

Have I been rebellious, disobedient or disrespectful to anyone in authority?

Have I lied to or deceived others—friends, boss, or coworkers?

Have I been arrogant and stubborn?

Have I gotten angry or nurtured and held grudges and resentments?

Have I refused to forgive others—parents, relatives, employers, former friend, a former spouse?

Have I cultivated hatred?

Have I felt sorry for myself or nurtured self-pity?

Have I engaged in sexual fantasies? Have I looked at others lustfully?

Have I read pornographic literature or looked at pornographic pictures, shows or movies?

Have I masturbated?

Have I lustfully kissed or sexually touched someone? Have I had sexual intercourse?

Have I had an abortion or encouraged another to have one?

Have I gossiped about others? Have I slandered anyone? Have I told lies about others? Have I mocked or made fun of others?

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<sup>2</sup> United States Conference of Catholic Bishops



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### **Responsibilities to society:**

Have I been a Christian witness to those with whom I work or associate? Have I spoken to anyone about the Gospel and how important it is to believe in Jesus?  
Have I allowed the Gospel to influence my political and social opinions?  
Have I had a proper Christian concern for the poor and needy?  
Have I paid my taxes?  
Have I fostered or nurtured hatred toward my 'political' opponents, either local, national or international?  
Have I been prejudiced toward others because of race, color, religion or social status?

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## **An Examination of Conscience for Married Persons**

### **Responsibilities to God:**

Have I gone to Mass every Sunday? Have I participated at Mass or have I day dreamed or been present with a blank mind?  
Have I prayed every day (15-20 minutes)?  
Have I read the Bible? Have I studied the truths of our faith and allowed them to become more part of the way I think and act? Have I read any spiritual books or religious literature?  
Have I told God that I want to love him with my whole heart, mind and strength? Do I hold any resentments toward God?  
Have I recognized my need for Jesus and his salvation? Have I asked the Holy Spirit to empower me to live the Christian life, to be a proper husband/wife and parent?  
Have I been financially generous to the Church? Have I participated in parish or religious activities?  
Have I held resentments toward the Church or Church authorities? Have I forgiven them?

### **Responsibilities to my spouse:**

Have I cared for my spouse? Have I been generous with my time? Have I been affectionate and loving? Have I told my spouse that I love him or her?  
Have I been concerned about the spiritual well-being of my spouse?



Have I listened to my spouse? Have I paid attention to his other concerns, worries, and problems? Have I sought these out?

Have I allowed resentments and bitterness toward my spouse to take root in my mind? Have I nurtured these? Have I forgiven my spouse for the wrongs he or she has committed against me?

Have I allowed misunderstanding, miscommunication or accidents to cause anger and mistrust?

Have I nurtured critical and negative thoughts about my spouse?

Have I manipulated my spouse in order to get my own way?

Have I tried to bully or overpower my spouse?

Have I spoken sharply or sarcastically to my spouse? Have I spoken in a demeaning or negative way? Have I injured my spouse through taunting and negative teasing? Have I called my spouse harsh names or used language that is not respectful?

Have I physically abused my spouse?

Have I gossiped about my spouse?

Have I undermined the authority and dignity of my spouse through disrespect and rebelliousness?

Have I been moody and sullen?

Have I bickered with my spouse out of stubbornness and selfishness?

Have I lied or been deceitful to my spouse?

Have I misused sexuality? Have I used sexual relations solely for my own selfish pleasure?

Have I been too demanding in my desire for sexual fulfillment? Have I been loving and physically affectionate in my sexual relations or have I used sexual relations in a way that would be demeaning or disrespectful to my spouse? Have I refused sexual relations out of laziness, revenge or manipulation?

Have I refused to conceive children out of selfishness or material greed? Have I used artificial means of contraception?

Have I had an abortion or encouraged others to have one?

Have I masturbated?

Have I flirted or fostered improper relationships with someone else, either in my mind or through words and actions?

Have I used pornography: books, magazines or movies?

Have I committed adultery?

Have I misused alcohol or drugs?

Have I been financially responsible?

### **Responsibilities to children:**

Have I cared for the spiritual needs of my children? Have I been a shepherd and guardian as God has appointed me? Have I tried to foster a Christian family where Jesus is Lord? Have I taught my children the Gospel and the commandments of God?

Have I prayed with them?

Have I been persistent and courageous in my training and teaching? Have I disciplined them



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when necessary? Have I been lazy and apathetic?

Have I talked with them to find out their problems, concerns and fears? Have I been affectionate toward them? Have I hugged them and told them that I love them? Have I played or recreated with them?

Have I been impatient and frustrated with them? Have I corrected them out of love in order to teach them what is right and good? Have I treated them with respect? Have I spoken to them in a sarcastic or demeaning way?

Have I held resentments against them? Have I forgiven them?

Have I been of one heart and mind with my spouse in the upbringing of the children? Or have I allowed disagreements and dissension to disrupt the training, educating and disciplining of our children?

Have I undermined the role of authority in the eyes of my children by speaking negatively against God, the Church, my spouse or others who hold legitimate authority over them?

Have I been a good Christian witness to my children in what I say and do? Or do I demand one standard for them and another for myself?

Have I been properly generous with my children regarding money and physical and material well-being? Have I been miserly? Have I been extravagant, thus spoiling them?

### **Responsibilities to society:**

Have I been a Christian witness to those with whom I work or associate? Have I spoken to anyone about the Gospel and how important it is to believe in Jesus?

Have I held resentments and anger against those with whom I work, relatives or friends? Have I forgiven them?

Have I been unethical in my business dealings? Have I stolen or lied?

Have I allowed the Gospel to influence my political and social opinions?

Have I had a proper Christian concern for the poor and needy?

Have I paid my taxes?

Have I fostered or nurtured hatred toward my "political" enemies, either local, national or international?

Have I been prejudiced toward others because of race, color, religion or social status?

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## Session 18: The Story Continues – Sacrament of Matrimony

### Overview

<p>Echoing the Mystery Topics</p>
<p>19. The Paschal Mystery 35. The Sacrament of Matrimony 57. The 4<sup>th</sup>-6<sup>th</sup> Commandments</p>
<p>The Story</p>
<p>God always intended unity with us, so that we could participate in His Trinitarian Life. Jesus is the Way and the Truth by whom we come to that Life. God, His plan of loving goodness, reconciled us to Himself through the blood of His Son, raised us up with Him in His Resurrection, and, through His Ascension, seats us with Him in the heavenly places. God’s plan to “unite all things in Christ” is lived and expressed in the matrimonial covenant between a baptized man and baptized woman. This vocation to matrimonial union is “written in the very nature of man and woman as they come from the hand of the Creator,” and represents the union of Christ and the Church. Through observing the commandments relating to loving our neighbor, we grow in God’s image and likeness.</p>
<p>Knowledge Targets</p>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The whole point of the Incarnation was the Paschal Mystery, by which God accomplishes our salvation.</li> <li>2. By dying, Christ destroyed our death. Death was never part of God’s plan for us, but he makes it the means of our salvation.</li> <li>3. Jesus rose from the dead, bringing us to share in the life of the resurrection.</li> <li>4. By ascending into heaven, Jesus brings His human nature to share fully in His divine glory.</li> <li>5. Jesus calls each of us to be saved by sharing in His Paschal Mystery.</li> <li>6. The Eucharist makes the Paschal Mystery present throughout all of time and joins us to it.</li> <li>7. From the beginning, God designed that man and woman should image the relationship of the persons of the Trinity, through their mutual gifts of self to each other, they are no longer two, but one.</li> <li>8. Through marriage, spouses are consecrated for the duties and for the dignity of the marital covenant.</li> <li>9. Man and woman as spouses and parents cooperate in a unique way in the creator’s work.</li> </ol>





<p>10. Marriage is a great good.          11. Marriage is the foundation of the “domestic church.”          12. The love of husband and wife in marriage is an icon the total, faithful, and self-giving love between Christ and the Church. The great power of human sexuality finds its fulfillment only within marriage.          13. God made every person in His own image and likeness. We must respect each person out of reverence for Him.          14. God makes His own Trinitarian Communion shine forth in the relationships between members of the family. In honoring our father and mother, we honor Him.</p>
Minor Rite or Catholic Devotion
Examination of Conscience

## Preparation for Catechist

***Echoing the Mystery* pp. 190-201, 350-359, 552-555**

Knowledge Target	Scripture References	Catechism of the Catholic Church
The whole point of the Incarnation was the Paschal Mystery, by which God accomplishes our salvation.	Gal 4:4-5, Heb 2:14, 1 Cor 15:3-5	571, 605, 607-608, 613, 616, 654, 661, 1067, 1151, 1340
By dying, Christ destroyed our death. Death was never part of God’s plan for us, but he makes it the means of our salvation.	Rom 5:20-21, Isa 53:3-10, Gal 2:20, Mt 26:28	478, 602-603, 606, 612, 615, 624, 627, 632
Jesus rose from the dead, bringing us to share in the life of the resurrection.	1 Pet 1:3, Rom 6:8-10, Isa 53:11-12, Jn 20:17	638, 642, 645, 648, 651, 655, 995, 1681
By ascending into heaven, Jesus brings His human nature to share fully in His divine glory.	Heb 2:9, Ps 47:5-6, Heb 10:12-14, Heb 9:24, Acts 2:33, Isa 52:11-14	659, 661-663, 667, 1084, 1137, 1166, 2749
Jesus calls each of us to be saved by sharing in His Paschal Mystery.	1 Pet 2:21-25, Eph 5:25-27, Rev 22:17, Col 3:3-4	618, 628, 766, 793, 1068, 1085, 1115, 1168-1169, 1225, 1682, 2014-2015
The Eucharist makes the Paschal Mystery present throughout all of time and joins us to it.	1 Cor 11:23-26, 1 Cor 5:7-8, Lk 22:19	611, 1225, 1323, 1337, 1362-1370
From the beginning, God designed that man and woman should image the relationship of the persons of the Trinity,	Mk 10:9, Matt 19:4-11, Eph 5:21-33	371, 1612-1617, 1639-1640, 2360-2361, 2364-2365; <i>FAMILY CONSORTIO</i> 56



through their mutual gifts of self to each other, they are no longer two, but one.		
Through marriage, spouses are consecrated for the duties and for the dignity of the marital covenant.	Eph 5:26, 31; 1 Cor 10:17; Eph 1:13-14	1323, 1368, 1537, 1621-1632, 2201
Man and woman as spouses and parents cooperate in a unique way in the creator's work.	Gen 1:27-28; 1 Pet 2:5, 9; Eph 3:14-19	372, 1652-1653, 2366, 2378, <i>GAUDIUM ET SPES</i> 50
Marriage is a great good.	Gen 2:18, Gal 6:2, Tob 8:4-9	1641-1648, 2360-2363, <i>GAUDIUM ET SPES</i> 49-50
Marriage is the foundation of the "domestic church."	1 Pet 2:5, 9; Eph 5:21-6:4	533, 759, 1268, 1655-1657, 2204
The love of husband and wife in marriage is an icon the total, faithful, and self-giving love between Christ and the Church. The great power of human sexuality finds its fulfillment only within marriage.	Ex 20:14, 17; Mal 2:13-16, Mt 5:27-32, Sir 24:14-16	2331-2332, 2339, 2347, 2351, 2364, 2366, 2378, 2393, 2516, 2518-2520
God made every person in His own image and likeness. We must respect each person out of reverence for Him.	Gen 2:7, Prov 24:11-12, Mt 5:21-22, Ex 20:13	2258, 2270, 2280, 2287-2288, 2299, 2302, 2317
God makes His own Trinitarian Communion shine forth in the relationships between members of the family. In honoring our father and mother, we honor Him.	Sir 7:27-28, Eph 3:14-21, Mt 7:9-11, Ex 20:12	239, 2200, 2205, 2207, 2212, 2214-2216, 2222-2225, 2232, 2234



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# **Session 18: The Story Continues – The Sacrament of Matrimony**

## **Session Outline**



## Session 18: The Story Continues – Sacrament of Matrimony

### Period of Preparation

Take a some time to consider these two passages from Sacred Scripture.

In the first passage, Tobias has just married a fellow Jewish woman and begins his marriage by praying to God with her on their wedding night. In the second, John sees a vision of the saints who have gone to heaven and we see the relationship of God with His saints likened to the gift of marriage.

*And Tobias began to pray,  
“Blessed art thou, O God of our fathers,  
and blessed be thy holy and glorious name  
for ever.  
Let the heavens and all thy creatures bless  
thee.  
Thou madest Adam and gavest him Eve his  
wife as a helper and support.  
From them the race of mankind has sprung.  
Thou didst say, ‘It is not good that the man  
should be alone;  
let us make a helper for him like himself.’*

*And now, O Lord, I am not taking this sister of  
mine because of lust, but with sincerity. Grant  
that I may find mercy and may grow old  
together with her.” And she said with him,  
“Amen.” Then they both went to sleep for the  
night.*

**Tob 8:5-9**

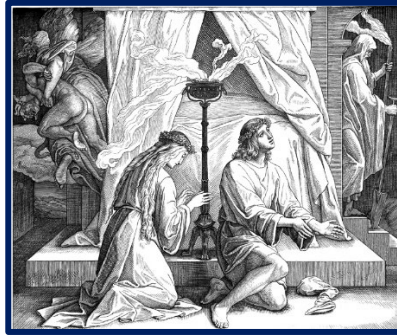
*“Let us rejoice and exult and give Him the  
glory,  
for the marriage of the Lamb has come, and  
His Bride has made herself ready; it was  
granted her to be clothed with fine linen,  
bright and pure” –  
for the linen is the righteous deeds of the  
saints.*

**Rev 19:7-8**



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**Consider the Church teaching that the gift of marriage is a reflection of Christ's love for the Church.**

**Spend some time in your journal and write down what you know about Christian Marriage and what you want God to reveal to you about Christian Marriage through today's proclamation and teaching of the Church.**

## **Church's Proclamation**

### **Celebration of the Word**

Eph 5:21-33

Psalm 128

Jn 2:1-10

### Reflection

God always intended unity with us, so that we could participate in His Trinitarian Life.

Jesus is the Way and the Truth by whom we come to that Life. God, His plan of loving goodness, reconciled us to Himself through the blood of His Son, raised us up with Him in His Resurrection, and, through His Ascension, seats us with Him in the heavenly places.

God's plan to "unite all things in Christ" is lived and expressed in the matrimonial covenant between a baptized man and baptized woman. This vocation to matrimonial union is "written in the very nature of man and woman as they come from the hand of the Creator," and represents the union of Christ and the Church.

Through observing the commandments relating to loving our neighbor, we grow in God's image and likeness.

## **Session Explanation: The Story Continues – The Sacrament of Matrimony**

### **The Paschal Mystery**

- The whole point of the Incarnation was the Paschal Mystery, by which God accomplishes our salvation.
- By dying, Christ destroyed our death. Death was never part of God’s plan for us, but he makes it the means of our salvation.
- Jesus rose from the dead, bringing us to share in the life of the resurrection.
- By ascending into heaven, Jesus brings His human nature to share fully in His divine glory.
- Jesus calls each of us to be saved by sharing in His Paschal Mystery.
- The Eucharist makes the Paschal Mystery present throughout all of time and joins us to it.

### **The Sacrament of Matrimony**

- From the beginning, God designed that man and woman should image the relationship of the persons of the Trinity, through their mutual gifts of self to each other, they are no longer two, but one.
- Through marriage, spouses are consecrated for the duties and for the dignity of the marital covenant.
- Man and woman as spouses and parents cooperate in a unique way in the creator’s work.
- Marriage is a great good.
- Marriage is the foundation of the “domestic church.”

### **The Sixth, Fifth, and Fourth Commandments**

- The love of husband and wife in marriage is an icon the total, faithful, and self-giving love between Christ and the Church. The great power of human sexuality finds its fulfillment only within marriage.
- God made every person in His own image and likeness. We must respect each person out of reverence for Him.
- God makes His own Trinitarian Communion shine forth in the relationships between members of the family. In honoring our father and mother, we honor Him.

**Which of the above is your muddiest point?**

**Form a question.**



### Summary of the Sacrament<sup>1</sup>

Minister	Required State	Frequency	Effect	Form	Matter
<b>The Spouses, with the priest or deacon as witness (CCC 1623)</b>	Each spouse must be a baptized man and woman with no impediment to marriage (CCC 1625)	Once and to one spouse as long as the spouse is living; again only if the spouse dies (CCC 2382)	The two become one flesh (Eph 5:31; perpetual and exclusive covenant partners (CCC 1638-1640)	The "I do", by which both spouses indicate their mutual consent to the marriage covenant (CCC 1626-1628)	Mutual Consent and Covenant to live together as husband and wife (CCC 1626); and the consummation of the Marriage (CCC 1640)
<b>Gen 1:27-28; 2:18- 25; Mt 19:3-12; Jn 2:1-11; Eph 5:25- 32</b>					

### Choose your “favorite” (most interesting) common error...

1. *“Marriage exists just for children.”* The primary reason for marriage is the sanctification of the spouses through fidelity to the covenant. In that is assumed the openness to procreation and education of children as the fruit of this married love.
2. *“Marriage is for personal happiness.”* Marriage is for sanctification. It means a daily death to self. It is both deeply fulfilling and deeply challenging. It is also the means by which God builds up the Church. Marriage exists as a sign of His unfailing love to the world and brings a happiness of its own.
3. *“Marriage is a ‘default’ way of living.”* Marriage is a vocation. It involves a call from God, with specific responsibilities in the Church.
4. *“Committing to living with someone is the same as being married.”* Love seeks to be definitive and to obtain the blessing of God. In order to be truly one, the union of the spouses must be sanctified by God’s grace. Spouses need the sanctifying graces of matrimony.

<sup>1</sup> Steve Ray, catholicconvert.com



5. *“Marriage can only last as long as love lasts.”* Married couples share in the irrevocable and definitive love of God. Love can and must be willed, even in times when it is not felt. Inviolable fidelity of the spouses is “the consequence of the gift of themselves which they make to each other. Love seeks to be definitive; it cannot be an arrangement ‘until further notice’” (CCC 1646).
6. *“Unless there is compatibility, there cannot be happiness.”* “Incompatibility” is a call to overcome differences and practice love in the face of difficulties. Complementarity, in terms of masculinity and femininity, is what is essential to the Sacrament.
7. *“An annulment is just a Catholic divorce.”* Christ said, “What God has joined together, let no man separate.” He did not give the Church the power to dissolve the sacramental bond, once the two truly become one through Holy Matrimony. However, because the Sacrament depends on the exchange of consent by the spouses, there is a possibility that what seemed to be a valid marriage, based on externals, might not be actually valid because of a failure on the part of one or both of the spouses. An annulment is a declaration that the conditions for a valid marriage were not met, and, therefore, there was never a marriage at all. Marriage is a holy sign on God’s love, which goes on forever, and the Church cannot change its permanent nature, as instituted by God.
8. *“Marriage can be between two men or two women.”* A union between two men or two women cannot be a marriage since marriage is “the covenant between a baptized man and a baptized woman.” Marriage originates in God’s creative plan, which can be seen by reason: physically, man and woman are made for one another, God created and defined marriage. It is simply impossible for a same-sex union to be what He intended.
9. *“You don’t have to intend to have kids when you get married. They’re optional.”* When spouses marry, they promise before God and the Church that they will accept the gift of children. God made marriage as a means of sanctification and to allow us to enter into His selfless love. Accepting the gift of children calls forth selfless love in us. When spouses close the door to new life, the marriage closes in on itself.





## Application

Each spouse is called by Christ to share in His Paschal Mystery by laying down his or her life for the other, as Christ did.

### Consider the six promises made at the time of Baptism:

1. Do you renounce sin, so as to live in the freedom of the children of God?  
"I do"
2. Do you renounce the lure of evil, so that sin may have no mastery over you?  
"I do"
3. Do you renounce Satan and all his works and empty promises?  
"I do"
4. Do you believe in God, the Father almighty, Creator of heaven and earth?  
"I do"
5. Do you believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord, who was born of the Virgin Mary, suffered death and was buried, rose again from the dead and is seated at the right hand of the Father?  
"I do"
6. Do you believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and life everlasting?  
"I do"

### Man's response to God – the theological virtues

Understanding this doctrine strengthens our **faith** when we see that by this Sacrament, God gives spouses the role of being cooperators in His creative work by begetting children and raising them in His Church. The ordinary events of daily life, for spouses, are also, through **faith**, the means by which God makes them holy.



Understanding this doctrine strengthens our **hope**. We see that in this Sacrament, God assures the spouses He will give them the grace to fulfill their vocation and so to reach the joys of heaven. They say to one another, “For the present life is nothing, and my most ardent dream is to spend it with you in such a way that we may be assured of not being separated in the life reserved for us” (St. John Chrysostom). Marriage foreshadows the nuptial feast of the Lamb.

Understanding this doctrine strengthens our **charity**, because we grasp this Sacrament leads the spouses to imitate the self-giving love of God through fulfilling their obligations to one another.

## **Celebration**

### **This Sunday**

During the Gospel, we read the account of the life of Christ. We see the priest reverence the book with a kiss.

As you listen to the words of the Gospel,

- Stand to receive the order of Christ, our King
- Sign your forehead, lips, and heart with a cross, praying, “May the words of this Gospel be forever on my mind, on my lips, and in my heart.”

### **Consider the Words of this prayer before the Consecration in the Liturgy of the Eucharist (Preface III of Easter)**

*It is truly right and just, our duty and our salvation,  
at all times to acclaim you, O Lord...*

*He never ceases to offer himself for us  
but defends us and ever pleads our cause before you:  
he is the sacrificial Victim who dies no more,  
the Lamb, once slain, who lives for ever.*

*Therefore, overcome with paschal joy,  
every land, every people exults in your praise  
and even the heavenly Powers, with the angelic hosts,  
sing together the unending hymn of your glory,  
as they acclaim...*



## **Closing our Session: Examination of Conscience for Single and Married Persons<sup>2</sup>**

### **An Examination of Conscience for Single Persons**

#### **Responsibilities to God:**

Have I gone to Mass every Sunday? Have I participated at Mass or have I daydreamed or been present with a blank mind?

Have I prayed every day (15-20 minutes)?

Have I read the Bible? Have I studied the truths of our faith and allowed them to become more a part of the way I think and act? Have I read any spiritual books or religious literature?

Have I told God that I want to love him with my whole heart, mind and strength? Do I hold any resentments toward God?

Have I recognized my need for Jesus and his salvation? Have I asked the Holy Spirit to empower me to live the Christian life?

Have I been financially generous to the Church? Have I participated in parish or religious activities?

Have I held resentments toward the Church or Church authorities? Have I forgiven them?

#### **Responsibilities to others and to myself:**

Have I been rebellious, disobedient or disrespectful to anyone in authority?

Have I lied to or deceived others—friends, boss, or coworkers?

Have I been arrogant and stubborn?

Have I gotten angry or nurtured and held grudges and resentments?

Have I refused to forgive others—parents, relatives, employers, former friend, a former spouse?

Have I cultivated hatred?

Have I felt sorry for myself or nurtured self-pity?

Have I engaged in sexual fantasies? Have I looked at others lustfully?

Have I read pornographic literature or looked at pornographic pictures, shows or movies?

Have I masturbated?

Have I lustfully kissed or sexually touched someone? Have I had sexual intercourse?

Have I had an abortion or encouraged another to have one?

Have I gossiped about others? Have I slandered anyone? Have I told lies about others? Have I mocked or made fun of others?

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<sup>2</sup> United States Conference of Catholic Bishops



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### **Responsibilities to society:**

Have I been a Christian witness to those with whom I work or associate? Have I spoken to anyone about the Gospel and how important it is to believe in Jesus?

Have I allowed the Gospel to influence my political and social opinions?

Have I had a proper Christian concern for the poor and needy?

Have I paid my taxes?

Have I fostered or nurtured hatred toward my 'political' opponents, either local, national or international?

Have I been prejudiced toward others because of race, color, religion or social status?

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## **An Examination of Conscience for Married Persons**

### **Responsibilities to God:**

Have I gone to Mass every Sunday? Have I participated at Mass or have I day dreamed or been present with a blank mind?

Have I prayed every day (15-20 minutes)?

Have I read the Bible? Have I studied the truths of our faith and allowed them to become more part of the way I think and act? Have I read any spiritual books or religious literature?

Have I told God that I want to love him with my whole heart, mind and strength? Do I hold any resentments toward God?

Have I recognized my need for Jesus and his salvation? Have I asked the Holy Spirit to empower me to live the Christian life, to be a proper husband/wife and parent?

Have I been financially generous to the Church? Have I participated in parish or religious activities?

Have I held resentments toward the Church or Church authorities? Have I forgiven them?



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### **Responsibilities to my spouse:**

Have I cared for my spouse? Have I been generous with my time? Have I been affectionate and loving? Have I told my spouse that I love him or her?

Have I been concerned about the spiritual well-being of my spouse?

Have I listened to my spouse? Have I paid attention to his other concerns, worries, and problems? Have I sought these out?

Have I allowed resentments and bitterness toward my spouse to take root in my mind? Have I nurtured these? Have I forgiven my spouse for the wrongs he or she has committed against me?

Have I allowed misunderstanding, miscommunication or accidents to cause anger and mistrust?

Have I nurtured critical and negative thoughts about my spouse?

Have I manipulated my spouse in order to get my own way?

Have I tried to bully or overpower my spouse?

Have I spoken sharply or sarcastically to my spouse? Have I spoken in a demeaning or negative way? Have I injured my spouse through taunting and negative teasing? Have I called my spouse harsh names or used language that is not respectful?

Have I physically abused my spouse?

Have I gossiped about my spouse?

Have I undermined the authority and dignity of my spouse through disrespect and rebelliousness?

Have I been moody and sullen?

Have I bickered with my spouse out of stubbornness and selfishness?

Have I lied or been deceitful to my spouse?

Have I misused sexuality? Have I used sexual relations solely for my own selfish pleasure?

Have I been too demanding in my desire for sexual fulfillment? Have I been loving and physically affectionate in my sexual relations or have I used sexual relations in a way that would be demeaning or disrespectful to my spouse? Have I refused sexual relations out of laziness, revenge or manipulation?

Have I refused to conceive children out of selfishness or material greed? Have I used artificial means of contraception?

Have I had an abortion or encouraged others to have one?

Have I masturbated?

Have I flirted or fostered improper relationships with someone else, either in my mind or through words and actions?

Have I used pornography: books, magazines or movies?

Have I committed adultery?

Have I misused alcohol or drugs?

Have I been financially responsible?



### **Responsibilities to children:**

Have I cared for the spiritual needs of my children? Have I been a shepherd and guardian as God has appointed me? Have I tried to foster a Christian family where Jesus is Lord? Have I taught my children the Gospel and the commandments of God?

Have I prayed with them?

Have I been persistent and courageous in my training and teaching? Have I disciplined them when necessary? Have I been lazy and apathetic?

Have I talked with them to find out their problems, concerns and fears? Have I been affectionate toward them? Have I hugged them and told them that I love them? Have I played or recreated with them?

Have I been impatient and frustrated with them? Have I corrected them out of love in order to teach them what is right and good? Have I treated them with respect? Have I spoken to them in a sarcastic or demeaning way?

Have I held resentments against them? Have I forgiven them?

Have I been of one heart and mind with my spouse in the upbringing of the children? Or have I allowed disagreements and dissension to disrupt the training, educating and disciplining of our children?

Have I undermined the role of authority in the eyes of my children by speaking negatively against God, the Church, my spouse or others who hold legitimate authority over them?

Have I been a good Christian witness to my children in what I say and do? Or do I demand one standard for them and another for myself?

Have I been properly generous with my children regarding money and physical and material well-being? Have I been miserly? Have I been extravagant, thus spoiling them?

### **Responsibilities to society:**

Have I been a Christian witness to those with whom I work or associate? Have I spoken to anyone about the Gospel and how important it is to believe in Jesus?

Have I held resentments and anger against those with whom I work, relatives or friends? Have I forgiven them?

Have I been unethical in my business dealings? Have I stolen or lied?

Have I allowed the Gospel to influence my political and social opinions?

Have I had a proper Christian concern for the poor and needy?

Have I paid my taxes?

Have I fostered or nurtured hatred toward my “political” enemies, either local, national or international?

Have I been prejudiced toward others because of race, color, religion or social status?

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## Session 19: The Story Continues – Holy Orders Overview

<p>Echoing the Mystery Topics</p>
<p>18. The Incarnation 34. The Sacrament of Holy Orders 24. Church: Guardian and Dispenser of the Mystery (4-5) 27. The Sacramental Economy</p>
<p>The Story</p>
<p>God is love, and he who abides in love abides in God. God the Father destined us in love to be His sons and daughters through Jesus Christ, the Word made flesh. God the Father sent Jesus to make clear to us the fullness of His plan for us and to make available to us “every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places.” Jesus, in His turn, sent His Apostles “to continue His mission” to us. Through their ministry, Jesus’ work continues in the Church until He comes again. The life of the Church is a mystery of the love of the Trinity who dwells in her. This love is guided, guarded and up-built by the hierarchy of the Church and her Magisterium, so that we unflinching meet Christ in her.</p>
<p>Knowledge Targets</p>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The Second Person of the Trinity, the Word of God, assumed a human nature.</li> <li>2. Jesus Christ is fully God and fully man.</li> <li>3. The mission of Christ is summed up in the reasons for the Incarnation.</li> <li>4. Everything Jesus said and did was for the purpose of accomplishing the reasons for the incarnation.</li> <li>5. By becoming man, God made it possible for us to share His life.</li> <li>6. At the Ascension, Christ commissioned the Apostles to be His ambassadors until the end of time.</li> <li>7. Through the Sacrament of Holy Orders, a man receives the power to act as Christ’s repetitive on Earth.</li> <li>8. Holy Orders has three degrees of configuration to Christ which delegate specific sharers of the Apostles’ mission to those who receive it.</li> <li>9. Receiving the Sacrament of Holy Orders ordains a man forever.</li> <li>10. The hierarchical structure of the Church serves the growth in holiness of the entire Church. The Apostles and their successors bring us into communion with Christ and to share in His mystery.</li> <li>11. The Church’s Magisterium faithfully guards the mysteries of Christ and hands them on to us so that we can have life to the full.</li> </ol>



<p>12. The Father's will is set forth in Christ and is made known in the Incarnation. The Church continues this Incarnational work and all her works bear this Incarnational stamp.</p> <p>13. Through the Sacramental Economy, Christ makes His Paschal Mystery present in every age and unites us to it, making us share His life.</p> <p>14. The Holy Spirit is the artisan of "God's masterpieces," the Sacraments. He directs the Church to shape the Sacramental mysteries and to dispense them through the Church's ministers.</p>
Minor Rite or Catholic Devotion
Examination of Conscience

## Preparation for Catechist

*Echoing the Mystery* pp. 180-189, 94-103, 340-349

Knowledge Target	Scripture References	Catechism of the Catholic Church
The Second Person of the Trinity, the Word of God, assumed a human nature.	Phil 2:5-11, 1 Tim 3:16, Jn 1:1-14	90, 461, 463
Jesus Christ is fully God and fully man.	Heb 4:15, 1 Jn 4:2, 2 Jn 1:7, Gal 4:4-5	464-470, 475
The mission of Christ is summed up in the reasons for the Incarnation.	1 Jn 4:9, Mt 11:29, 2 Pet 1:4, 1 Jn 3:5	457-460
Everything Jesus said and did was for the purpose of accomplishing the reasons for the incarnation.	Jn 6:63, Jn 1:14, Jn 20:31	513-514, 521, 525, 531-532, 536, 539, 541, 548, 556, 563
By becoming man, God made it possible for us to share His life.	Heb 1:3	427, 1084, 1087, 1114-1116, 1548, 1988, 2011, 2666
At the Ascension, Christ commissioned the Apostles to be His ambassadors until the end of time.	Rom 10:14-15, 2 Cor 3:6, Mt 10:40, 2 Cor 5:20, Mt 28:16-20	859, 1535
Through the Sacrament of Holy Orders, a man receives the power to act as Christ's repetitive on Earth.	Heb 5:1, 4; Heb 7:11; 1 Pet 5:2-3	1142, 1538, 1545, 1548-1549, 1577-1578, 2121
Holy Orders has three degrees of configuration to Christ which delegate specific sharers of the Apostles' mission to those who receive it.	Jn 20:22-23, Mk 10:43-45, Lk 22:27, 1 Tim 3:1-13	886, 896, 1554-1580





Receiving the Sacrament of Holy Orders ordains a man forever.	Jn 10:36, Heb 5:6, 1 Tim 4:14	698, 886, 896, 1121, 1581-1589, 1554-1589
The hierarchical structure of the Church serves the growth in holiness of the entire Church. The Apostles and their successors bring us into communion with Christ and to share in His mystery.	Mk 4:11, 22, 2 Cor 11:2-3, 1 Cor 2:7-13	589, 762, 771, 774; <i>LUMEN GENTIUM</i> 4, 8; <i>SACROSANCTUM CONCILIUM</i> 2
The Church's Magisterium faithfully guards the mysteries of Christ and hands them on to us so that we can have life to the full.	Mk 4:11, 22, 2 Cor 11:2-3, 1 Cor 2:7-13	589, 762, 771, 774; <i>LUMEN GENTIUM</i> 4, 8; <i>SACROSANCTUM CONCILIUM</i> 2
The Father's will is set forth in Christ and is made known in the Incarnation. The Church continues this Incarnational work and all her works bear this Incarnational stamp.	1 Jn 1:1-2; 1 Pet 3:21-22; Heb 12:8, 22-24	515, 521, 669, 690, 776, 1088, 1119, 1121, 1373
Through the Sacramental Economy, Christ makes His Paschal Mystery present in every age and unites us to it, making us share His life.	Col 2:9-10, 12; Col 1:26-27	519, 521, 536-537, 556, 568, 618, 628, 654-655, 766, 824, 1085, 1115, 1116, 1118, 1988, 1999
The Holy Spirit is the artisan of "God's masterpieces," the Sacraments. He directs the Church to shape the Sacramental mysteries and to dispense them through the Church's ministers.	Titus 3:4-7, 2 Cor 5:20, Eph 2:10, Jn 7:38-39	1101, 1117, 1121, 1125, 1131, 611, 893, 1084, 1086-1088, 1120, 737-739, 1091, 1092, 1107-1109, 1116, 2017

# **Session 19: The Story Continues – Holy Orders**

## **Session Outline**

## Session 19: The Story Continues – Holy Orders

### Period of Preparation

Take a few minutes to consider the Jesus' continued presence on earth through the Sacraments. Spend some time in your journal and write down what you know about the Priesthood and what you want God to reveal to you about Priesthood through today's proclamation and teaching of the Church.

### Church's Proclamation

#### Celebration of the Word

Heb 10:12-25

Psalm 110

Lk 22:14-19

#### Reflection

God the Father destined us in love to be His sons and daughters through Jesus Christ, the Word made flesh.

God the Father sent Jesus to make clear to us the fullness of His plan for us and to make available to us "every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places." Jesus, in His turn, sent His Apostles "to continue His mission" to us. Through their ministry, Jesus' work continues in the Church until He comes again.

God is love, and he who abides in love abides in God. The life of the Church is a mystery of the love of the Trinity who dwells in her. This love is guided, guarded and up-built by the hierarchy of the Church and her Magisterium, so that we unflinching meet Christ in her.



## Session Explanation: The Story Continues – Holy Orders

### The Incarnation

- The Second Person of the Trinity, the Word of God, assumed a human nature.
- Jesus Christ is fully God and fully man.
- The mission of Christ is summed up in the reasons for the Incarnation.
- Everything Jesus said and did was for the purpose of accomplishing the reasons for the incarnation.
- By becoming man, God made it possible for us to share His life.

### The Sacrament of Holy Orders

- At the Ascension, Christ commissioned the Apostles to be His ambassadors until the end of time.
- Through the Sacrament of Holy Orders, a man receives the power to act as Christ's repetitive on Earth.
- Holy Orders has three degrees of configuration to Christ which delegate specific sharers of the Apostles' mission to those who receive it.
  - The Episcopacy (The Pope and Bishops)
  - The Presbyterate (Ordained Priests)
  - Diaconate (Deacons)
- Receiving the Sacrament of Holy Orders ordains a man forever.

### Church: Guardian and Dispenser of the Mystery

- The hierarchical structure of the Church serves the growth in holiness of the entire Church. The Apostles and their successors bring us into communion with Christ and to share in His mystery.
  - The Holy Father and Bishops are themselves apostles – the successors of the Apostles. They participate in the office of Jesus Christ by teaching and governing the Church and conferring all seven Sacraments.
  - Priests are helpers of their bishop by sharing in the priesthood of Christ. They minister in obedience to their bishop and assist in preaching the word, some governing, and in conferring some of the Sacraments.
  - Deacons assist the bishop by serving the Christian faithful. Deacons serve the Word by preaching and teaching and have the power by their ordination to bless.
- The Church's Magisterium faithfully guards the mysteries of Christ and hands them on to us so that we can have life to the full.
  - The pope and bishops, led by the Holy Spirit, guide the faithful into all truth through the charism of infallibility.
  - The Pope is Bishop of Rome and exercises his cathedra in St. John Lateran Archbasilica. As he most fully participates in the office of Jesus Christ, head of



the church, the pope alone is entrusted with the charism to make infallible statements about faith and morals without needing the agreement of the other bishops of the Church.

- Each Bishop has his own seat of authority, a cathedra, in his cathedral, from which he exercises his charism to govern. Each bishop is head of his own diocese and is able to participate in the charism of infallibility when his teaching and governance are in union with the unbroken tradition of the Church, the deposit of the faith.

### **The Sacramental Economy**

- The Father's will is set forth in Christ and is made known in the Incarnation. The Church continues this Incarnational work and all her works bear this Incarnational stamp.
- Through the Sacramental Economy, Christ makes His Paschal Mystery present in every age and unites us to it, making us share His life.
- The Holy Spirit is the artisan of "God's masterpieces," the Sacraments. He directs the Church to shape the Sacramental mysteries and to dispense them through the Church's ministers.

### **Summary of the Sacrament**

<b>Minister</b>	<b>Required State</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Effect</b>	<b>Form</b>	<b>Matter</b>
The Bishop CCC 1576	A Baptized man who has been called for ordination by God; in the Western rite, with the exception of permanent deacons, the ordained must be celibate (CCC 1577-1580)	Only once; separate ordination for Deacon, Priest, and Bishop (CCC 1582)	A special relationship to Christ to lead and serve the Church; indelible spiritual character imprinted on the soul (CCC 1581; 1594)	The Bishop's "specific consecratory prayer asking God for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit and his gifts proper to the ministry to which the candidate is being ordained" (CCC 1573)	Laying on of the Bishop's hands with the consecratory prayer (CCC 1538)
<b>Acts 6:5-6; 13:3; 14:23; 20:28; Jn 20:21-23; 1 Tim 3:1; 4:14; 2 Tim 1:6; Titus 1:5; Phil 1:1</b>					

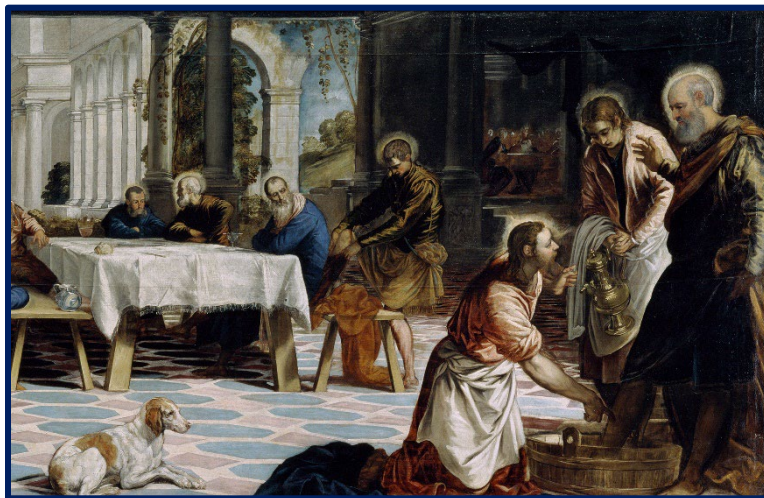


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## Reflect

Spend some time observing this Sixteenth Century image of Jesus washing the feet of His disciples at the Last Supper, by Tinteretto. What does this reveal about the Church's hierarchy and those who are called to most fully participate in the priesthood of Jesus Christ?



## Choose your “favorite” (most interesting) common error...

1. *“Deacons aren’t really important – they are just an afterthought.”* It was under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit that the Apostles understood that they needed to extend their power in order to carry out their work. They needed the help of others to share the burden of particular parts of their ministry. Deacons serve the Church by assisting with her daily needs: care for the poor, witnessing marriages, baptizing, and preaching.
2. *“Married men shouldn’t be able to become deacons – deacons are no different from priests, after all!”* Deacons are ordained to service, not to the priesthood. They represent Christ in a different way, and it is perfectly compatible with their office to be married. However, deacons are not able to marry after their ordination.



3. *“The Church hierarchy is all about power. Deacons are the least powerful and the Pope is the most powerful, he’s like the president of a corporation. Priests are all working to get ‘promoted’ to bishop, and if they don’t get promoted it is because they aren’t good enough.”*  
The priesthood is the love of the heart of Jesus. Bishops receive the full degree of apostolicity in order to govern, teach, and sanctify their diocese. However, even the simplest priest could not desire greater dignity than that which God has already given him: that of standing in Persona Christi before the altar and in the confessional.
4. *“The Church is stuck in the past. Priests should be able to get married. The Church’s system of priests is anti-woman and anti-sex.”* The Church affirms the goodness of marriage and human sexuality, but recognizes celibacy for the sake of the kingdom as a means of realizing a greater love – one given to God alone. Priests do not marry for the sake of dedicating themselves to this greater love.
5. *“The Church is sexist because it forbids women priests.”* The Church cannot ordain women because Christ did not. A woman is not intended by God to be a father. Her gifts are different, and the Church recognizes that her glory is to serve in other ways.
6. *“Bishops are old, celibate men who have no idea what ‘real’ people are dealing with. They are ignorant of the actual problems in the world.”* Bishops are chosen for their wisdom and their care for their flocks. They are deeply concerned about the good of the people entrusted to their care, which means that they know they must know what these people experience from day-to-day. Above all, though, they are enriched with the grace of the Holy Spirit, who guides them in shepherding their flocks.

## Application

The priesthood represents the love of the heart of Jesus for His Church. Christ showed the depth of this love in His Paschal Mystery, in which the priest is called to participate intimately.

### Consider the six promises made at the time of Baptism:

1. Do you renounce sin, so as to live in the freedom of the children of God?  
“I do”
2. Do you renounce the lure of evil, so that sin may have no mastery over you?  
“I do”



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3. Do you renounce Satan and all his works and empty promises?

“I do”

4. Do you believe in God, the Father almighty, Creator of heaven and earth?

“I do”

5. Do you believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord, who was born of the Virgin Mary, suffered death and was buried, rose again from the dead and is seated at the right hand of the Father?

“I do”

6. Do you believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and life everlasting?

“I do”

### **Man’s response to God – the theological virtues**

**Believing** that this gift of Christ is real facilitates our **belief** in the Real Presence, the absolution of sin, and the guarantee of the Holy Spirit to guide the Church.

This doctrine strengthens and seals **confidence** in God for the sake of the faithful, especially regarding freedom from the scourge of sin, the temptation to doubt in the face of the cleric’s weaknesses, and the peace of mind that Christ has fully provided for His Church.

**Loving** Christ and His Church comes with understanding the provisions He made to ensure His apostolic mission from the Father and His constant **love** for us.





## Celebration

### This Sunday

During the Thanksgiving and Preface in the Liturgy of the Eucharist, we give thanks for our salvation and recall the mystery we celebrate that day, which is why we give thanks.

As you participate in the Liturgy of the Eucharist,

- At “lift up your hearts,” bring yourself to attention, and make an effort to put away any distracting thoughts.
- Let the prayer teach you what to give thanks for.

### Consider the words of this preface, taken from the Chrism Mass on Holy Thursday before Easter.

*It is truly right and just, our duty and our salvation,  
always and everywhere to give you thanks,  
Lord, holy Father, almighty and eternal God.  
For by the anointing of the Holy Spirit  
you made your Only Begotten Son  
High Priest of the new and eternal covenant,  
and by your wondrous design were pleased to decree  
that his one Priesthood should continue in the Church.  
For Christ not only adorns with a royal priesthood  
the people he has made his own,  
but with a brother's kindness he also chooses men  
to become sharers in his sacred ministry  
through the laying on of hands.  
They are to renew in his name  
the sacrifice of human redemption,  
to set before your children the paschal banquet,  
to lead your holy people in charity,  
to nourish them with the word  
and strengthen them with the Sacraments.  
As they give up their lives for you  
and for the salvation of their brothers and sisters,  
they strive to be conformed to the image of Christ himself  
and offer you a constant witness of faith and love...*



## **Closing our Session: Examination of Conscience for Single and Married Persons<sup>1</sup>**

### **An Examination of Conscience for Single Persons**

#### **Responsibilities to God:**

Have I gone to Mass every Sunday? Have I participated at Mass or have I daydreamed or been present with a blank mind?

Have I prayed every day (15-20 minutes)?

Have I read the Bible? Have I studied the truths of our faith and allowed them to become more a part of the way I think and act? Have I read any spiritual books or religious literature?

Have I told God that I want to love him with my whole heart, mind and strength? Do I hold any resentments toward God?

Have I recognized my need for Jesus and his salvation? Have I asked the Holy Spirit to empower me to live the Christian life?

Have I been financially generous to the Church? Have I participated in parish or religious activities?

Have I held resentments toward the Church or Church authorities? Have I forgiven them?

#### **Responsibilities to others and to myself:**

Have I been rebellious, disobedient or disrespectful to anyone in authority?

Have I lied to or deceived others—friends, boss, or coworkers?

Have I been arrogant and stubborn?

Have I gotten angry or nurtured and held grudges and resentments?

Have I refused to forgive others—parents, relatives, employers, former friend, a former spouse?

Have I cultivated hatred?

Have I felt sorry for myself or nurtured self-pity?

Have I engaged in sexual fantasies? Have I looked at others lustfully?

Have I read pornographic literature or looked at pornographic pictures, shows or movies?

Have I masturbated?

Have I lustfully kissed or sexually touched someone? Have I had sexual intercourse?

Have I had an abortion or encouraged another to have one?

Have I gossiped about others? Have I slandered anyone? Have I told lies about others? Have I mocked or made fun of others?

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<sup>1</sup> **United States Conference of Catholic Bishops**



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### **Responsibilities to society:**

Have I been a Christian witness to those with whom I work or associate? Have I spoken to anyone about the Gospel and how important it is to believe in Jesus?

Have I allowed the Gospel to influence my political and social opinions?

Have I had a proper Christian concern for the poor and needy?

Have I paid my taxes?

Have I fostered or nurtured hatred toward my 'political' opponents, either local, national or international?

Have I been prejudiced toward others because of race, color, religion or social status?

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## **An Examination of Conscience for Married Persons**

### **Responsibilities to God:**

Have I gone to Mass every Sunday? Have I participated at Mass or have I day dreamed or been present with a blank mind?

Have I prayed every day (15-20 minutes)?

Have I read the Bible? Have I studied the truths of our faith and allowed them to become more part of the way I think and act? Have I read any spiritual books or religious literature?

Have I told God that I want to love him with my whole heart, mind and strength? Do I hold any resentments toward God?

Have I recognized my need for Jesus and his salvation? Have I asked the Holy Spirit to empower me to live the Christian life, to be a proper husband/wife and parent?

Have I been financially generous to the Church? Have I participated in parish or religious activities?

Have I held resentments toward the Church or Church authorities? Have I forgiven them?



## Responsibilities to my spouse:

Have I cared for my spouse? Have I been generous with my time? Have I been affectionate and loving? Have I told my spouse that I love him or her?

Have I been concerned about the spiritual well-being of my spouse?

Have I listened to my spouse? Have I paid attention to his other concerns, worries, and problems? Have I sought these out?

Have I allowed resentments and bitterness toward my spouse to take root in my mind? Have I nurtured these? Have I forgiven my spouse for the wrongs he or she has committed against me?

Have I allowed misunderstanding, miscommunication or accidents to cause anger and mistrust?

Have I nurtured critical and negative thoughts about my spouse?

Have I manipulated my spouse in order to get my own way?

Have I tried to bully or overpower my spouse?

Have I spoken sharply or sarcastically to my spouse? Have I spoken in a demeaning or negative way? Have I injured my spouse through taunting and negative teasing? Have I called my spouse harsh names or used language that is not respectful?

Have I physically abused my spouse?

Have I gossiped about my spouse?

Have I undermined the authority and dignity of my spouse through disrespect and rebelliousness?

Have I been moody and sullen?

Have I bickered with my spouse out of stubbornness and selfishness?

Have I lied or been deceitful to my spouse?

Have I misused sexuality? Have I used sexual relations solely for my own selfish pleasure?

Have I been too demanding in my desire for sexual fulfillment? Have I been loving and physically affectionate in my sexual relations or have I used sexual relations in a way that would be demeaning or disrespectful to my spouse? Have I refused sexual relations out of laziness, revenge or manipulation?

Have I refused to conceive children out of selfishness or material greed? Have I used artificial means of contraception?

Have I had an abortion or encouraged others to have one?

Have I masturbated?

Have I flirted or fostered improper relationships with someone else, either in my mind or through words and actions?

Have I used pornography: books, magazines or movies?

Have I committed adultery?

Have I misused alcohol or drugs?

Have I been financially responsible?



### **Responsibilities to children:**

Have I cared for the spiritual needs of my children? Have I been a shepherd and guardian as God has appointed me? Have I tried to foster a Christian family where Jesus is Lord? Have I taught my children the Gospel and the commandments of God?

Have I prayed with them?

Have I been persistent and courageous in my training and teaching? Have I disciplined them when necessary? Have I been lazy and apathetic?

Have I talked with them to find out their problems, concerns and fears? Have I been affectionate toward them? Have I hugged them and told them that I love them? Have I played or recreated with them?

Have I been impatient and frustrated with them? Have I corrected them out of love in order to teach them what is right and good? Have I treated them with respect? Have I spoken to them in a sarcastic or demeaning way?

Have I held resentments against them? Have I forgiven them?

Have I been of one heart and mind with my spouse in the upbringing of the children? Or have I allowed disagreements and dissension to disrupt the training, educating and disciplining of our children?

Have I undermined the role of authority in the eyes of my children by speaking negatively against God, the Church, my spouse or others who hold legitimate authority over them?

Have I been a good Christian witness to my children in what I say and do? Or do I demand one standard for them and another for myself?

Have I been properly generous with my children regarding money and physical and material well-being? Have I been miserly? Have I been extravagant, thus spoiling them?

### **Responsibilities to society:**

Have I been a Christian witness to those with whom I work or associate? Have I spoken to anyone about the Gospel and how important it is to believe in Jesus?

Have I held resentments and anger against those with whom I work, relatives or friends? Have I forgiven them?

Have I been unethical in my business dealings? Have I stolen or lied?

Have I allowed the Gospel to influence my political and social opinions?

Have I had a proper Christian concern for the poor and needy?

Have I paid my taxes?

Have I fostered or nurtured hatred toward my “political” enemies, either local, national or international?

Have I been prejudiced toward others because of race, color, religion or social status?

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