

MAY JESUS CHRIST BE PRAISED

JUNE 4, 2017 – PENTECOST

SPIRITUAL PONDERINGS

Sacred Scripture Part I

Saint Jerome wrote “Ignorance of Scripture is ignorance of Christ.” It is therefore important for Catholics from time to time to refresh and expand their knowledge of Scripture. I hope that this month’s reflections will help you grow in your knowledge of Scripture.

One day little Joey was asked by his mother what he had learned in Sunday school. “Well, Mom, our teacher told us how God sent Moses behind enemy lines on a rescue mission to lead the Israelites out of slavery in Egypt. When he got the Red Sea, he had his army build a pontoon bridge and all the people walked across the bridge to safety. Finally he radioed headquarters for reinforcements. They sent bombers to blow up the bridge and trap all the Egyptians on the other side so that the Israelites were all safe.”

“Now, Joey, is this really what your teacher taught you?” his mother asked.

“We, no, Mom, but if I told you what the teacher told us you would never believe it!” Joe answered.

The preceding story/joke hints at one of the problems that our world has today with Sacred

Scripture. Most of people no longer read the stories of the Scripture within a sense of awe and wonder because we have heard the stories so many times before. The phrase “familiarity breathes contempt” certainly applies to many people’s experience of Scripture. It is not that we don’t like Scripture but rather we do not treat it with the respect it deserves. We are not letting it penetrate into the core of our being so that it can shape us. Our lack of awe when it comes to the Bible has led many people into totally misunderstanding the Bible and the Church’s teaching on Sacred Scripture. The following are ten guidelines that help me understand Sacred Scripture better.

1. Word of God
We Catholics believe that Bible is truly the Word of God but God did not dictate the Bible word for word to the Biblical authors. We believe God inspired the Biblical authors within the context of their day. For example God did not whisper into the ear of the author of Genesis how exactly created the world in seven days. Instead we believe the author inspired by God to write about how God brings order out of Chaos used the idea of God

Pentecost Sunday Lectionary:
63 Gospel JN 20:19-23

Spiritual Reflection: St.

Ambrose wrote the following about a person who receives the Holy Spirit: “Remember, then, that you received a spiritual seal, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of knowledge and reverence, the spirit of holy fear. Keep safe what you received. God the Father sealed you, Christ the Lord strengthened you and sent the Spirit into your hearts as the pledge of what is to come.”

Spiritual Questions:

1. Which gift of the Holy Spirit do you rely upon the most?
2. Which gift of the Holy Spirit do you lack or wish you had more of?
3. What does it mean “to be sealed”?
4. Compare the above passage with John 14:27?
5. How can you grow in knowledge or appreciation of the Holy Spirit?



creating the world in seven days to teach us that world was not an accident but was deliberately planned by God. It is in this way that we believe God inspired the Biblical writers.

This inspires me to even greater amazement that God could painstakingly inspire each author through his or her cultural experiences to write about Him in the way that He wanted. It would have been easier for Him to just divinely dictate to someone. God though does take short cuts. He is an expert craftsman.

The Bible is yet another way God communicates with us that both protects our free will and requires a little bit of faith on our part.

2. Sacred Scripture and Tradition
Someone texted me the other day a yes or no question and I responded by typing “y” for yes. I was caught off guard a few moments later when I received another text explaining why the person had asked the first question. I quickly realized that he had mistaken the “y” I used to symbolize for my yes for “y” that might symbolize the question why. This was once again another reminder of how important context is when communicating with others.

God in His wisdom gave us not only the Bible but also a key from which to make sure that we are interpreting the Bible in the correct way. This key, we call Tradition with a capital “T”.

Tradition helps us interpret the Scriptures in the way that God intended us to.

Many Protestant faiths declare that we should only follow Scripture the problem with that is twofold. The first is nowhere is Scripture does it say that Scripture alone should be used and secondly Scripture can be interpreted differently if we do not have a common frame of reference. For example Jesus tells his followers one moment that they must “Hate their father and mother...” If we do not have tradition we run the risk of interpreting this in a very literal sense.



PRAYER(S) OF THE WEEK

Prayers to the Holy Spirit

Here are some unique prayers to the Holy Spirit

PRAYER TO THE HOLY SPIRIT

Come, Holy Spirit, fill my heart with Your holy gifts. Let my weakness be penetrated with Your strength this very day that I may fulfill all the duties of my state conscientiously, that I may do what is right and just.

Let my charity be such as to offend no one, and hurt no one's feelings; so generous as to pardon sincerely any wrong done to me.

Assist me, O Holy Spirit, in all my trials of life, enlighten me in my ignorance, advise me in my doubts, strengthen me in my weakness, help me in all my needs, protect me in temptations and console me in afflictions.

Graciously hear me, O Holy Spirit,

and pour Your light into my heart, my soul, and my mind.

Assist me to live a holy life and to grow in goodness and grace.
Amen.

PRAYER TO THE HOLY SPIRIT by St. Augustine

Breathe into me, Holy Spirit, that my thoughts may all be holy.

Move in me, Holy Spirit, that my work, too, may be holy.

Attract my heart, Holy Spirit, that I may love only what is holy.

Strengthen me, Holy Spirit, that I may defend all that is holy.

Protect me, Holy Spirit, that I may always be holy.

PRAYER TO THE HOLY SPIRIT by St. Alphonsus Liguori

Holy Spirit, Divine Consoler, I adore You as my true God, with God the Father and God the Son. I adore You and unite myself to the adoration You receive from the angels and saints.

I give You my heart and I offer my ardent thanksgiving for all the grace which You never cease to bestow on me.

O Giver of all supernatural gifts, who filled the soul of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of God, with such immense favors, I beg You to visit me with Your grace and Your love and to grant me the gift of holy fear, so that it may act on me as a check to prevent me from falling back into my past sins, for which I beg pardon.

Grant me the gift of piety, so that I

may serve You for the future with increased fervor, follow with more promptness Your holy inspirations, and observe your divine precepts with greater fidelity.

Grant me the gift of knowledge, so that I may know the things of God and, enlightened by Your holy teaching, may walk, without deviation, in the path of eternal salvation.

Grant me the gift of fortitude, so that I may overcome

courageously all the assaults of the devil, and all the dangers of this world which threaten the salvation of my soul.

Grant me the gift of counsel, so that I may choose what is more conducive to my spiritual advancement and may discover the wiles and snares of the tempter.

Grant me the gift of understanding, so that I may apprehend the divine mysteries and

by contemplation of heavenly things detach my thoughts and affections from the vain things of this miserable world.

Grant me the gift of wisdom, so that I may rightly direct all my actions, referring them to God as my last end; so that, having loved Him and served Him in this life, I may have the happiness of possessing Him eternally in the next. Amen.

Catholic Quiz

Last Week's Answers: Which of the following does not belong?

1. Lisieux Calcutta SIENNA Avila - Sienna is the only city listed that did not to produce a St. Theresa.
2. Loyola Antioch Laconi JERUSALEM – Jerusalem is the only city listed that did not produce a St. Ignatius
3. More DESALES Aquinas Beckett – DeSales is the only saint in the list whose first name is not Thomas
4. Chasuble Dalmatic CORPOREAL Cope – Corporeal is not a vestment.



This week's Questions: Which of the following does not belong?

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|------------|-------------|------------|--------------|
| 1. Lilly | Hammer | Keys | Christ Child |
| 2. Lourdes | Moscow | Knox | Tepeyac |
| 3. Messiah | Christ | Son of Man | Anointed |
| 4. Peter | Bartholomew | Andrew | Thomas |

CATHOLIC HUMOR

Catholic Laughs

Ten Catholic Pickup Lines

1. Let's get out of here. I know a much cozier little Catholic bookstore downtown.
2. I bet I can guess your confirmation name.
3. You've got stunning scapular-brown eyes.
4. Did you feel what I felt when we reached into the holy water font at the same time?
5. Confess here often?
6. God told me to come talk to you.

7. Catholics don't shake hands; Catholics gotta hug!
8. Did it hurt when you fell from Heaven?
9. Is it a sin that you stole my heart?
10. Wanna go to adoration together? My parish or yours?



CATHOLIC QUOTES

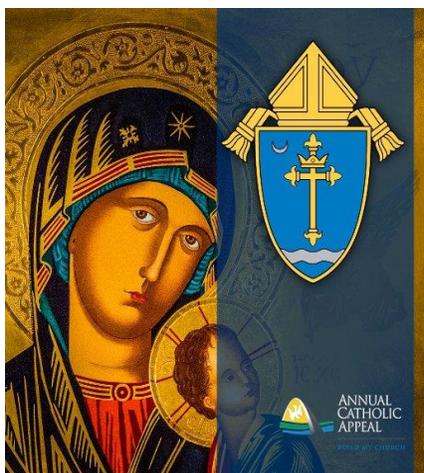
"And my Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home with him.' My friends, consider the greatness of this solemn feast that commemorates God's coming as a guest into our hearts! If some rich

and influential friend were to come to your home, you would promptly put it all in order for fear something there might offend your friend's eyes when he came in. Let all of us then who are preparing our inner

homes for God cleanse them of anything our wrongdoing has brought into them." St. Gregory Dialogos, on Pentecost in Be Friends of God

"But as the old Confusion of tongues was laudable, when men who were of one language in wickedness and impiety, even as some now venture to be, were building the Tower; for by the confusion of their language the unity of their intention was broken up, and their undertaking destroyed; so much more

worthy of praise is the present miraculous one. For being poured from One Spirit upon many men, it brings them again into harmony. And there is a diversity of Gifts, which stands in need of yet another Gift to discern which is the best, where all are praiseworthy." - St. Gregory Nazianzen, Oration on Pentecost



Even a seemingly small act of generosity can grow into something far beyond what we could ever ask or imagine (see Eph 3:20)—the creation of a community of love in this world, and beyond this world, because wherever love grows, it is stronger than death (1 Cor. 13:8).

Indeed, if we raise funds for the creation of a community of love, we are helping God build the Kingdom. – Fr. Henri Nouwen. (Spiritual Writer)

This will be my last reflection this year on the Annual Catholic Appeal. I just want to point out that if we each give what we can, our Church will be able to do great things for our community. How do I know? Because this is what we have done in the past. – Fr. Pastorius

Spiritual Adoption Prayer



"Jesus, Mary and Joseph, I love you very much. I beg you to spare the life of [baby's name] the unborn baby that I have spiritually adopted who is in danger of abortion." - Prayer of Archbishop Fulton J. Sheen

MONTH 5 – Developing Baby – “Mommy felt me kick today!” Spiritual Adoption Program

Your spiritually adopted baby weighs over one pound now, and his mother can feel his movement. Before this time, he was too small for her to feel. Although he swam with ease in his watery world, he needed to be big and strong enough to kick hard against the outside wall and dent it - - the inside wall of the uterus has little feeling. We are mid-way through the pregnancy now. Your prayers have helped your baby's mother continue with her pregnancy and seek the help she needs.

