

## **RCIA NEW TESTAMENT**

### **Gospel Reading for Next week and reflection**

#### **GOSPELS**

THE WORD GOSPEL COMES FROM THE ANGLO SAXON WORD "GODSPELL" WHICH MEANS GOOD NEWS.

MATTHEW, MARK, LUKE AND JOHN

THE GOSPELS TELL US THE STORY OF JESUS' LIFE, MINISTRY, DEATH AND RESURRECTION

MATTHEW 'S GOSPEL BEGINS BY EXPLAINING THE GENEALOGY AND BIRTH OF JESUS WHICH FULFILLS THE PROPHECY IN THE OLD TESTAMENT. HE EMPHASIS JOSEPH'S ROLE AS A GOOD FATHER BY DESCRIBING HIS ATTITUDE TOWARDS MARY BY NOT WANTING HER TO SUFFER ANY SHAME AT BEING WITH CHILD AND NOT MARRIED. A CRIME IN MARY'S DAY PUNISHABLE BY DEATH.

MARK IS TRADITIONALLY ATTRIBUTED TO JOHN MARK, A DISCIPLE OF PETER, WHO WROTE DOWN THE STORY OF JESUS AS PETER TOLD IT. MARK'S GOSPEL IMMEDIATELY ESTABLISHES JESUS' MINISTRY BY STARTING WITH JESUS' BAPTISM IN THE JORDAN. NEARLY ONE HALF OF MARK'S GOSPEL DEALS WITH JESUS' CRUCIFIXION AND RESURRECTION.

LUKE WAS A GENTILE PHYSICIAN AND COMPANION TO THE APOSTLE PAUL. HE IS THE ONLY GENTILE TO HAVE WRITINGS IN THE NEW TESTAMENT. GENTILE MEANS NOT OF JEWISH DESCENT. HE WAS WRITING FOR A GENTILE AUDIENCE IN GREECE. THAT IS WHY HIS EMPHASIS IS ON MARY. LUKE TELLS OF THE ANNUNCIATION AND MARY'S TRIP TO SEE HER COUSIN ELIZABETH WHO IS ALSO WITH CHILD. HER CHILD IS JOHN THE BAPTIST.

JOHN ARRANGES EVENTS OF JESUS' LIFE TO SHOW US THAT JESUS WAS THE DIVINE SON OF GOD AND THE PROMISED MESSIAH. HE TELLS US OUTRIGHT THAT HIS GOSPEL HAS AN EVANGELICAL PURPOSE BY SAYING, "THIS HAS BEEN WRITTEN SO THAT YOU MAY BELIEVE THAT JESUS IS THE CHRIST, THE SON OF GOD, AND THAT BELIEVING YOU MAY HAVE LIFE IN HIS NAME."

#### **THE ACTS OF THE APOSTLES**

VOLUME II TO LUKE'S GOSPEL. TELLS OF THE BEGINNING CHURCH. LUKE WANTED TO SHOW HOW THE CHURCH SPREAD FROM JERUSALEM ALL OVER PALESTINE AND THEN TO THE GENTILES. MORE THAN ONE HALF OF LUKES

GOSPEL IS DEVOTED TO THE MINISTRY OF PAUL AND HIS TRAVELS TO PREACH THE GOOD NEWS.

## **PAUL'S LETTERS**

OLDEST CHRISTIAN DOCUMENTS WE HAVE. WE CAN LEARN FROM PAUL'S LETTERS A GREAT DEAL ABOUT PAUL'S FAITH AND UNDERSTANDING OF JESUS CHRIST. WHAT THAT MEANS FOR THE LIFE OF THE ORDINARY CHRISTIAN. THE AMAZING PART ABOUT WHAT PAUL WRITES IS THAT HE NEVER MET JESUS. HE WAS A PERSECUTER OF JESUS' FOLLOWERS. THE ACCOUNT OF HIS CONVERSION IS TOLD IN THE ACTS OF THE APOSTLES. IN HIS LETTERS HE WRITES TO THE PEOPLE THAT HE PREACHED TO IN VARIOUS AREAS.

PEOPLE THOUGHT JESUS WAS COMING BACK RIGHT AWAY. PAULS LETTERS ADDRESSED THE FRUSTRATION AND WEAKNESSES THAT CHRISTIANS WENT THROUGH WHILE THEY WAITED.

PAUL'S LETTERS STILL SPEAK TO US TODAY.

## **OTHER LETTERS**

NOT UNLIKE THE ENSICLECLES OF TODAY THAT WE HAVE FROM THE POPES. THEY WERE INTENDED TO KEEP THE PEOPLE THAT THEY WERE WRITTEN TO, CLOSE TO CHRIST AND HELP EXPLAIN CHRIST'S LOVE FOR US AND WHAT THEY NEEDED TO DO TO SHOW THEIR LOVE IN RETURN.

## **BOOK OF REVELATION**

MOST MISUNDERSTOOD BOOK IN THE NEW TESTAMENT. REVELATION IS A BOOK ABOUT THE STRUGGLES BETWEEN GOOD AND EVIL.

THE APOCYLPTIC WRITING IS INTENDED TO GIVE GRAVITY TO THE SUBJECT. SOME RELIGIONS POINT TO THE BOOK OF REVELATION AS THE BOOK THAT DESCRIBES THE END TIMES. IT DESCRIBES THE END TIMES, BUT NOT THE END OF THE WHOLE WORLD. IT'S ABOUT OUR PERSONAL END TIME AND THE WAR THAT IS WAGED ON OUR BEHALF EVERY SECOND OF EVERY DAY.

WHAT IS THE BATTLE BETWEEN GOOD AND EVIL OVER?

OUR SOULS. GOD IS FUNNY THAT WAY. WANTS WHAT HE HAS CREATED BACK. SATIN WANTS US BECAUSE HE CAN'T CREATE LIFE, HE CAN'T CREATE ANYTHING EXCEPT CHAOS AND CONFUSION.

DO YOU KNOW WHAT WE HAVE THAT SATIN WILL NEVER HAVE? SOMETHING THAT ENSURES THAT GOD WILL BE THE VICTOR OF OUR SOULS?

THE MASS. RIGHT IN THE MIDDLE OF THIS BATTLE JOHN DESCRIBES THE MASS. HE TALKS ABOUT THE PRIEST WITH HIS SASH AND FEET SHINING LIKE BRASS AND THE LAMB STANDING AS IF SLAIN.

HOW CAN A LAMB BE STANDING IF IT HAS BEEN SLAIN? IF THE LAMB IS THE LAMB OF GOD BECAUSE THE LAMB OF GOD DID NOT DIE.

REMEMBER COVENANTS AT THE BEGINNING OF THE OLD TESTAMENT?

THERE IS ONE MORE COVENANT IN THE NEW TESTAMENT. DO YOU KNOW WHO IT IS WITH? JESUS

SO BECAUSE HUMANITY COULDN'T SEEM TO GET IT RIGHT AND BECAUSE GOD LOVES US SO MUCH THIS IS WHAT HE DID. HE MADE A COVENANT WITH JESUS WHO IS GOD INCARNATE. THE CRUCIFIXION WAS THE SACRIFICE TO SEAL THE DEAL. THIS COVENANT CAN NEVER BE BROKEN. HE SAVED US ONCE AND FOR ALL.

NOW WE HAVE THE MASS TO ENSURE THAT WE RECEIVE ETERNAL LIFE WITH CHRIST.

RECAP: THE BIBLE IS THE INSTRUCTION MANUEL. SO ALL WE HAVE TO DO IS GO TO CHURCH AND HAVE SOMEONE READ THE INSTRUCTION MANUAL TO US, THEN THE PRIEST EXPLAINS WHAT WAS JUST READ JUST IN CASE WE DIDN'T UNDERSTAND THE DIRECTIONS AND THEN WE RECEIVE CHRIST JUST BECAUSE HE LOVES US. NOT BECAUSE OF ANYTHING WE HAVE DONE TO EARN IT.

**168 HOURS IN A WEEK. SPARE 1 FOR CHRIST AND KEEP SATAN IN THE DARK AND KEEP YOURSELF IN THE LIGHT OF CHRIST.**

### The Ten Commandments

The Ten Commandments were given to Moses from God, on two stone tablets at the top of Mt. Sinai

I was going to tell you that they are our rules we have to follow, but when I said "Rules" the first thing that popped into my mind was: "DON'T!" Don't do this! Don't do that! I thought oh no! That's not how I want to present the commandments!

So, instead I'll say a more refreshing approach to following the commandments!

The commandments are our moral law. As American citizens we all abide by laws right?

Occasionally some of us have been pulled over for not following the law. Instead of remembering what not to do, make the commandments more a question of what to do! And use them as a guideline for leading our lives.

Moral Law includes the Two great commandments= To love God and To Love our neighbor

The First 3 commandments are your relationship with God.  
The last 7 deal with your relationship with one another, your neighbor.

**1. I, the Lord, am your God, You shall not have other gods besides me.**

Have God above everything else!!!

God 1<sup>st</sup> and foremost! Not money, power, popularity, cars, tv's etc.

Base your daily actions on that love of God, a positive way to prove that love is to follow the next 9 commandments positively.

**2. You shall not take the name of the LORD, your God, in vain.**

Pretty self explanatory! Don't curse using the Lords name in vain!

Remember I said I was trying not to say Don't?! some use other words ( Gosh darn it?) instead let's remember that saying "If you don't have something nice to say don't say anything at all!"

That's just it! For the 2<sup>nd</sup> commandment we can remember to use God's name positively! Either by praising God when we pray or by speaking the word of the Lord.

**3. Remember to keep the Sabbath day.**

Instead of viewing Sunday as "have to do" you can view attending mass as a time to concentrate on holy things, rest, reflection and family. Another example is: Think of everything God has given you throughout the week... yet we can certainly spare an hour to show our appreciation for the good and bad he has given us! It is our obligation to attend mass.

The main objectives of the next 7 are to honor parents, human life, human sexuality, the property of others, and the truth.

**4. Honor your Father and your Mother.**

Show respect for our parents as children and as adults. Not just to respect, but also see to their care when they become old and infirm.

(Show respect to your whole family and the community as well. Showing respect and love for our country---this doesn't mean we have to agree with our leaders, but it does mean that we must be proud to be citizens of the country in which we reside.)

**5. You shall not kill.**

Means just that! Other than what it reads, this commandment includes “right to life” issues---- like abortion, euthanasia, suicide, murder, the death penalty, and other unnatural ways of ending human life. “Thou shall not Murder”

Letting anger lead to violence, mental or physical. Racism, Sexism, abusing alcohol or drugs.

Basically actions that kill spirits of others and actions that harm the body and mind.

**6. You shall not commit adultery.**

This commandment calls for honesty and loyalty in all relationships.

Honoring human sexuality.

We should not have sex outside of marriage.

Prostitution, pornography, homosexual activity, masturbation, group sex, rape, incest, and child molestation.

**7. You shall not steal.**

Respecting and honoring the possessions of others.

They deal not only with outright theft but with feelings of envy, greed and jealousy in reaction to what others have.

**8. You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.**

Lying or not telling the truth-----because we believe that God is truth, we are obligated to honor the truth-----we must never consciously tell things that are not true or take advantage of our neighbors.

**9. You shall not covet your neighbor's wife.**

It means a lot more than looking with longing at a suntanned, bikini-clad neighbor. Allowing yourself to get hung up on such thoughts can and will create problems. The problem will be when you can't shake those thoughts and may even wish to encourage them. And that's where you pass over the line into sin.

(Think of others as whole persons, not as sex vending machines)

**10. You shall not covet your neighbor's goods.**

We have all heard of the phrase “keeping up with the Joneses”, we should be satisfied with what we have; enough to eat, clothes to wear, and a place to stay.

Commandment 7 & 10 are alike

Commandment 6 & 9 are alike

So that's a basic overview of the Ten Commandments. They are not independent of each other, nor can you pick and choose which ones to follow. They go hand in hand with each other to use as directions to live in a positive way and without sin.