

1. Read (Seek) — Read the verses slowly and prayerfully several times. Write down any words or phrases that seem to stand out:

2. Meditate (Find) — Now begin to reflect on the verses and ask God what it means and how he wants to speak to you through the passage. **God what are you saying to me through this?**

3. Pray (Ask) — Respond from your heart to what God has been saying to you. **What do you want me to know?** Write down your prayer to him or record whatever he says to you.

4. Contemplate (Taste) — Be quiet before the Lord enjoying His presence. **How is God calling you to act in response to what he has shown you?**

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[1] Jn. 1:7

[2] Gary Hoge; *How Can Catholicism Be True When Catholics Are So Dead?*

[3] Fulton Sheen; Foreword to *Radio Replies* Vol. 1, (1938) page ix

[4] Code of Canon Law; Can. 840

[5] Code of Canon Law; Can. 879

[6] The Order of the Mass; Penitential Act

Quick Connect

What is the Gospel saying? John 1:6-8, 19-28 — Pg. 1

What is the Church saying Past and Present? Pages 1-3

What is God saying to you through this passage? Page 4

Gospel Reading – John 1:6-8, 19-28 – Roman Missal

A man named John was sent from God. He came for testimony, to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. He was not the light, but came to testify to the light. And this is the testimony of John: When the Jews from Jerusalem sent priests and Levites to him to ask him, "Who are you?" He admitted and did not deny it, but admitted, "I am not the Christ." So they asked him, "What are you then? Are you Elijah?" And he said, "I am not." "Are you the Prophet?" He answered, "No." So they said to him, "Who are you, so we can give an answer to those who sent us? What do you have to say for yourself?" He said: "I am *the voice of one crying out in the desert, 'make straight the way of the Lord,'*" as Isaiah the prophet said." Some Pharisees were also sent. They asked him, "Why then do you baptize if you are not the Christ or Elijah or the Prophet?" John answered them, "I baptize with water; but there is one among you whom you do not recognize, the one who is coming after me, whose sandal strap I am not worthy to untie." This happened in Bethany across the Jordan, where John was baptizing.

Spiritual Reading – Office of Readings

From *St. Augustine*

John is the voice, but the Lord *is the Word who was in the beginning*. John is the voice that lasts for a time; from the beginning Christ is the Word who lives forever. Take away the word, the meaning, and what is the voice? Where there is no understanding, there is only a meaningless sound. The voice without the word strikes the ear but does not build up the heart. However, let us observe what happens when we first seek to build up our hearts. When I think about what I am going to say, the word or message is already in my heart. When I want to speak to you, I look for a way to share with your heart what is already in mine.

Jesus on Trial – Lesson and Discussion

"He was not the light, but came to testify to the light."

In the Gospel Reading, we read about how Saint John the Baptist was to give "testimony" to Jesus Christ as the Messiah. When we hear the word testimony, we think of someone who is on trial, as the courts hear testimony for or against someone's case. Jesus was on trial His whole life, from His birth till his death.

Who else gave testimony? Besides Saint John the Baptist, all those who encountered Jesus gave testimony, from the Samaritan woman, to the healed leper, the crowds who heard and saw His miracles, the Spirit, and His disciples.

What if we fail to give testimony to Jesus? There is a grave danger if we do not speak about Jesus correctly and imitate Him in our life. If we do not share Jesus with the world, the world will not know Him. If we share misinformation about Him, people might even reject Christ and God altogether. Why is it that some of the people in this video say the things that they do about Jesus.

To what did they give testimony? John the Baptist was “to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him.”[1] We are all called to testify that Jesus is the Messiah, the Anointed One. Jesus is the one who was promised to come and bring salvation to the whole world. Our life is to be a testimony to the Life of Christ. When our life is not a testimony to the Life of Christ we have failed to testify to the Light and thus keep our self and others by our poor example in the dark. “G.K. Chesterton once said that the best argument against Christianity is Christians. That is certainly true of Catholicism. Pope John Paul II, putting it politely, says, ‘The Catholic Church does not forget that many among her members cause God’s plan to be discernible only with difficulty.’ (*Ut Unum Sint*, 11). But is that really an argument against the truth of the faith? I don’t see how. To argue that Catholicism is untrue because it doesn’t transform the lives of those who don’t practice it, is like arguing that aspirin doesn’t work because it doesn’t relieve the headaches of those who don’t take it.”[2]

Why was Jesus constantly on trial? Jesus is still being held on trial. During His life on earth, Jesus had to prove to others that He was truly the Son of God. There were people during His life who helped give this testimony as well. After His Resurrection and Ascension, it was His Apostles who gave testimony. Even today, we see those who question if Jesus was truly the Son of God. We see those who attack Christians, but we can never be afraid to bring the Gospel to all we meet.

Where do we see Jesus and our faith being put on trial? And for what do we see Jesus and our faith being put on trial? Where have we personally been put “on trial” because of our belief in Jesus Christ?

What if someone gives false testimony? Unfortunately, there are many people who do not share in the fullness of truth. For many of them, it is purely out of ignorance. Servant of God, Archbishop Fulton Sheen, once said, “There are not one hundred people in the United States who hate The Catholic Church, but there are millions who hate what they wrongly perceive the Catholic Church to be.”[3] There is only one testimony because there can only be one truth. With the Holy Spirit, the Church has been led to give the true testimony of Jesus

Christ. We must be willing to instruct the ignorant, in kindness and in generosity, through our testimony.

How do we give testimony? To give testimony is to bring the light and faith in Jesus Christ just as Saint John the Baptist did. We are all called to bring joy, peace and happiness to all we meet. We do this by our life; we show it in our thoughts, words and actions everyday throughout our whole lives. We must continue to study and learn from those who have passed on the testimony through the Scriptures, the Church Fathers and the Magisterium. We must also be “witnesses” as Jesus commanded His Apostles in the Acts of the Apostles. The translation for “witness” in the Book of Acts means, “martyr”, and while we may not be killed for our faith, we must be willing to die to ourselves and face a public death in order to bring testimony of the fullness of truth to the darkness of the world. We also give testimony to Christ through our oneness. The Sacraments “contribute in the greatest way to establish, strengthen, and manifest ecclesiastical communion.”[4] The fact that we all prepare, receive and live a Sacramental life gives testimony to Christ and His Church.

Why is oneness important in giving testimony? In the court of law, if two or more witnesses give testimonies that contradict each other, the case could be thrown out altogether. Imagine what the world must think if they see the witness of thousands of Christians, and those Christians are all contradicting each other. This lack of unity causes many people to have thrown out the case for Christ.

How does the Catholic Church provide oneness or unity in its testimony? Each person’s calling in life is to know, love and serve God. Our knowledge, love and service is our greatest testimony. One of the four marks of the Church is that we are “one”. We are one in our knowledge, one in authentic love and one in true service of God. Our common doctrine helps us to know God. Our common liturgy, sacraments and prayer helps us to love God. Our common morals and imitation of the Life of Christ helps us to serve God.

What gives us the strength to be His witnesses and to give testimony? It is only through the Holy Spirit that we are able to be His witnesses and give testimony. The Holy Spirit is given at Baptism and strengthened in Confirmation. “The sacrament of confirmation strengthens the baptized and obliges them more firmly to be witnesses of Christ by word and deed and to spread and defend the faith.”[5] This quote from the Code of Canon Law says it all. Our witness must be in word and deed. We must be conscience of our words and deeds and ask if we are giving witness to Christ. This is why at the Mass we pray, “... that I have greatly sinned, in my thoughts and in my words, in what I have done and in what I have failed to do...”[6] Our goal is to spread and defend the faith, both of which are vital in our time and in every moment of time.