

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] Catechism of the Catholic Church (CCC) 500

[2] Ignatius Study Bible Mt. 12:46

[3] CCC 469

[4] CCC 501

[5] CCC 818

[6] CCC 2791

[7] CCC 788

Quick Connect

What is the Gospel saying? Mark 6:1-6 — 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 – Mark 6:1-6 – Roman Missal

Jesus departed from there and came to his native place, accompanied by his disciples. When the sabbath came he began to teach in the synagogue, and many who heard him were astonished. They said, “Where did this man get all this? What kind of wisdom has been given him? What mighty deeds are wrought by his hands! Is he not the carpenter, the son of Mary, and the brother of James and Joses and Judas and Simon? And are not his sisters here with us?” And they took offense at him. Jesus said to them, “A prophet is not without honor except in his native place and among his own kin and in his own house.” So he was not able to perform any mighty deed there, apart from curing a few sick people by laying his hands on them. He was amazed at their lack of faith.

Spiritual Reading – Office of Readings

From a sermon by Saint Augustine, bishop
A sacrifice to God is a contrite spirit

I acknowledge my transgression, says David. If I admit my fault, then you will pardon it. Let us never assume that if we live good lives we will be without sin; our lives should be praised only when we continue to beg for pardon. But men are hopeless creatures, and the less they concentrate on their own sins, the more interested they become in the sins of others. They seek to criticize, not to correct. Unable to excuse themselves, they are ready to accuse others. This was not the way that David showed us how to pray and make amends to God, when he said: I acknowledge my transgression, and my sin is ever before me. He did not concentrate on others' sins; he turned his thoughts on himself. He did not merely stroke the surface, but he plunged inside and went deep down within himself. He did not spare himself, and therefore was not impudent in asking to be spared.

Do you want God to be appeased? Learn what you are to do that God may be pleased with you. Consider the psalm again: If you wanted sacrifice, I would indeed have given it; in burnt offerings you will take no delight. Are you then to be without sacrifice? Are you to offer nothing? Will you please God without an offering? Consider what you read in the same psalm: If you wanted sacrifice, I would indeed have given it; in burnt offerings you will take no delight. But continue to

listen, and say with David: A sacrifice to God is a contrite spirit; God does not despise a contrite and humble heart. Cast aside your former offerings, for now you have found out what you are to offer. In the days of your fathers you would have made offerings of cattle—these were the sacrifices. If you wanted sacrifice, I would indeed have given it. These then, Lord, you do not want, and yet you do want sacrifice.

You will take no delight in burnt offerings, David says. If you will not take delight in burnt offerings, will you remain without sacrifice? Not at all. A sacrifice to God is a contrite spirit; God does not despise a contrite and humble heart.

You now have the offering you are to make. No need to examine the herd, no need to outfit ships and travel to the most remote provinces in search of incense. Search within your heart for what is pleasing to God. Your heart must be crushed. Are you afraid that it might perish so? You have the reply: Create a clean heart in me, O God. For a clean heart to be created, the unclean one must be crushed.

We should be displeased with ourselves when we commit sin, for sin is displeasing to God. Sinful though we are, let us at least be like God in this, that we are displeased at what displeases him. In some measure then you will be in harmony with God's will, because you find displeasing in yourself what is abhorrent to your Creator.

Spiritual Brotherhood – Lesson and Discussion

“Is he not the...brother of James”

Why does the Bible say that Jesus had brothers and sisters? Jesus did not have any biological brothers or sisters. Mary is and will always be “ever-virgin”. The reason that the Bible uses the words “brothers” and “sisters” is simply because of the translation from the Greek and Hebrew languages. Regarding this passage, the Catechism says that they are more likely “Jesus’ cousins or more distant relative.”[1]

In fact, there are many other places in the Bible where the words “brothers” and “sisters” are used when we clearly know that there is no biological relationship between the people. “The NT often mentions Jesus’ brethren (13:55; Mk. 3:31; 6:3; Lk. 8:19; Jn. 2:12; 7:3; Acts. 1:14; Gal. 1:19)...Four observations support the Church’s tradition: (1) These brethren are never called the children of Mary, although Jesus himself is (Jn. 2:1; 19:25; Acts. 1:14). (2) Two names mentioned, James and Joseph, are sons of a different ‘Mary’ in Mt. 27:56 (Mk. 15:40). (3) It is unlikely that Jesus would entrust his Mother to the Apostle John at his Crucifixion if she had other natural sons to care for her (Jn. 19:26-27). (4) The word ‘brethren’ (Gk. Adelphoi) has a broader meaning than blood brothers. Since ancient Hebrew had no word for ‘cousin’, it was customary to use ‘brethren’ in the Bible for relationships other than blood brothers. In the Greek OT, a ‘brother’ can be nearly related cousin (1 Chron. 23:21-22), a more remote kinsman (Deut 23:7; 2 Kings 10:13-

14), an uncle or a nephew (Gen. 13:8), or the relation between men bound by covenant (2 Sam 1:26; cf. 1 Sam 18:3). Continuing this OT tradition, the NT often uses ‘brother’ or ‘brethren’ in this wider sense. Paul uses it as a synonym for his Israelite kinsmen in Rom. 9:3. It also denotes biologically unrelated Christians in the New Covenant family of God (Rom. 8:29; 12:1; Col. 1:2; Heb. 2:11; Jas. 1:2; CCC 500).”[2]

All that being said, this does not mean that we as the Church are not his brothers and sisters. “The Church thus confesses that Jesus is inseparably true God and true man. He is truly the Son of God who, without ceasing to be God and Lord, became a man and our brother...”[3] On the cross, Jesus gave His mother to us as our spiritual mother. (cf. Jn. 19:26-27) “The Son whom she brought forth is he whom God placed as the first-born among many brethren, that is, the faithful in whose generation and formulation she cooperates with a mother’s love.”[4] St. Paul speaks of Christ as the first-born raised from the dead so that we can truly call Him our brother. (cf. Rom. 8:28-30)

How can we call ourselves “brothers and sisters in Christ”? We can call ourselves brothers and sisters in Christ by our Baptism. “All who have been justified by faith in Baptism are incorporated into Christ; they therefore have a right to be called Christians, and with good reason are accepted as brothers in the Lord by the children of the Catholic Church.”[5] Because we are united with Christ by our Baptism we dare to say “Our Father”. We say these words because the Father and Son are one and we are united with the Son by our Baptism. As St. Paul says, through our Baptism we die and rise again. Thus, if we are united with Jesus through our Baptism, “In communion by faith in Christ and by Baptism, they ought to join in Jesus’ prayer for the unity of his disciples.”[6]

What is our responsibility as brethren of Jesus? As spiritual brothers and sisters of Christ by our Baptism, we are called to follow Jesus. Jesus said, “For whoever does the will of my Father in heaven is my brother, and sister, and mother.” (Mt. 12:49) Jesus spoke many times about loving our neighbor (cf. Mk. 12:31) and St. Paul spoke of not condemning each other when we are brothers and sisters in Christ (cf. Rm. 14:10). This is because we must act as Christ acts. He is the “older brother” that we look up to and strive to emulate. He teaches us how to pray, how to act, how to live, and how to love. He also shows that by our Baptism we are all united with Him. When we hurt one of our brothers we hurt Christ. (cf. Mt. 25:45) We must work for the kingdom of God everyday by bringing peace to every person no matter their race, creed, gender, or age. We can do this because Jesus sent the Holy Spirit. “When his visible presence was taken from them, Jesus did not leave his disciples orphans. He promised to remain with them until the end of time; he sent them his Spirit. As a result communion with Jesus has become, in a way, more intense: ‘By communicating his Spirit, Christ mystically constitutes as his body those brothers of his who are called together from every nation.’”[7]