

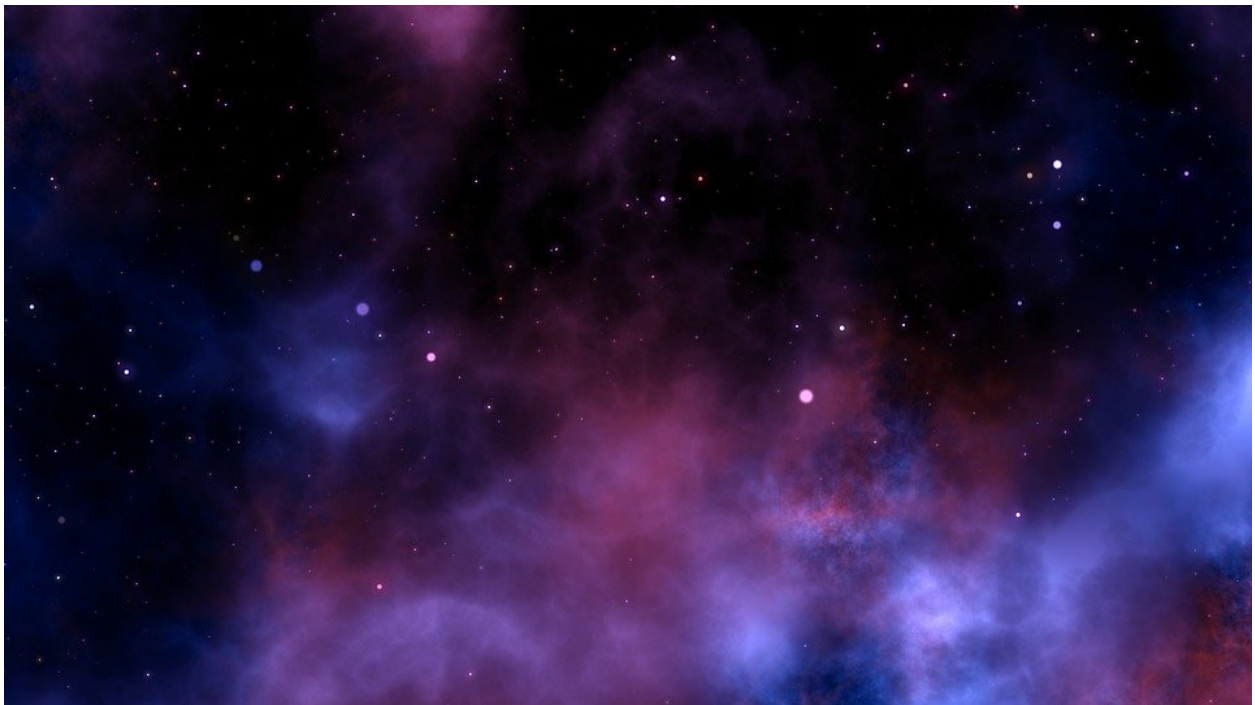
My Soul Longs for You, O God

Opening Prayer: The Our Father

What We See and What We Notice

Video: Count the ball passes

There are these two young fish swimming along, and they happen to meet an older fish swimming the other way, who nods at them and says, “Morning, boys. How’s the water?” And the two young fishes swim on for a bit, and then eventually one of them looks over at the other and goes, “What the hell is water?”



The world fills us with awe and wonder. The beauty of a rainbow, the vastness of the universe and the playful laughter of children all lead us to contemplate the source and meaning of creation. In our search, we use our reason and faith to find purpose. We sense an invisible meaning behind what we see in the world. To find our purpose and goal in life, we need to know God, who is the author of this meaning.

“Faith and reason are like two wings on which the human spirit rises to the contemplation of truth; and God has placed in the human heart a desire to know the truth-in a word, to know himself-so that, by knowing and loving God, men and women may also come to the fullness of truth about themselves.” (John Paul II, *Fides et Ration*, Prologue)

Invisible Reality in the Visible World

Invisible Meaning	Visible Sign
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Friendliness	Wave hand
Love	Kiss
Married	“I do”
Volunteer	Raise hand



- Can you do the visible without the invisible?
- Can you do the invisible without the visible?
- If we do one without the other, then something is wrong
- Visible sign + invisible meaning = a relationship, need both
- We need the sacraments to bridge the gap between the visible world and the invisible spiritual meaning.
- Sacraments give us a relationship to God and to all of us in the Church.

God has a plan for us.

- How can we know about the meaning of creation and how we fit into it?
- The history of the world is the story of God’s self-emptying love
- Being part of God’s plan gives our lives meaning. St. Augustine wrote “...you have made us for yourself, O Lord, and our hearts are restless until they rest in you.” (*Confessions*, 1.1.1)
- We participate in God’s plan together, not individually.
- We need to see the invisible reality behind the visible world.

How Can We Know God's Plan?

Stories and Symbols have Meaning

- Symbol = συν + βαλλω = together + throw
- Symbols manifested the presence of the sacred in rituals.
- Symbols became a means of mutual participation between man and God.
- Religion brings sign and meaning together in rituals and symbols
- “What Christ is doing invisibly in this world through the Spirit, he is at the same time doing visibly through the mission of the apostles and of the members of the church community.” (Schillebeeckx, *Christ the Sacrament of the Encounter with God*, pg. 50)
- In Christ the invisible love of God appeared in the flesh of a man
- The invisible appeared in the visible flesh of Christ; it now appears in the Eucharist.
- The visible draws its meaning from the invisible
- The world is a vast incarnation which the devil tries to contradict.
- Diablos = δια + βαλλω = apart + throw



What are the Sacraments?

- Christian symbols are the union in Christ of the divine and the human.
- Sacraments are real visible symbols of an invisible reality.
- How would you answer the question “what is a sacrament?” Think about this question during the next few months.

The Sacraments Join the Visible and Invisible

- The sacraments are visible signs God's presence which guide us and unite us to Him.
- The sacraments were instituted by Christ, are entrusted to the Church, and dispensed divine life to us. (CCC 1131)
- God promises to be present in the seven sacraments (Baptism, Confirmation, Confession, Eucharist, Marriage, Holy Orders and Anointing of the Sick).
- The sacraments are symbols that are real.

Video: The Veil Removed

Why the OCIA Process?

- We started this discussion with a search for meaning behind the visible.
- We find in the sacraments a real union with Christ which gives our lives meaning.
- In the next few months, we will learn about God and His Church, study and experience Him in the Sacraments, and conform our lives to Him in the 10 Commandments.
- We are all images of God, but we have difficulty seeing ourselves in this way. The sacraments have great meaning because they are encounters with God and who we truly are.

Next week: Chapter 2 and 3, Revelation and Tradition

Questions?