

Response of Faith

Bringing God into Your Life Through Christ's Love and Sacrifice

Opening prayer

Sin

- Sin is a privation of the good.
- When Adam and Eve ate the forbidden fruit, they separated themselves from God.
- God allows sin because of freedom.
- Not having what we need causes physical or spiritual suffering.
- What we need is harmony with God.
- Seeking God in the Sacraments and in each other leads to harmony and happiness.



Job



- Job suffered great misfortune.
- Job's 3 friends saw his suffering as retribution for his sins.
- Job demanded justice!
- Job sought God in his suffering.
- Our relationship with God is not a bargain because we have nothing to bargain with. (Gustavo Gutierrez)

- Suffering is not vengeance from God.
- Suffering teaches us lessons.
- Job learns that God is just, but Job must be patient with his suffering.
- Job never would have learned this if he hadn't suffered.

Video: Bishop Barron on Job and Suffering

Lazarus

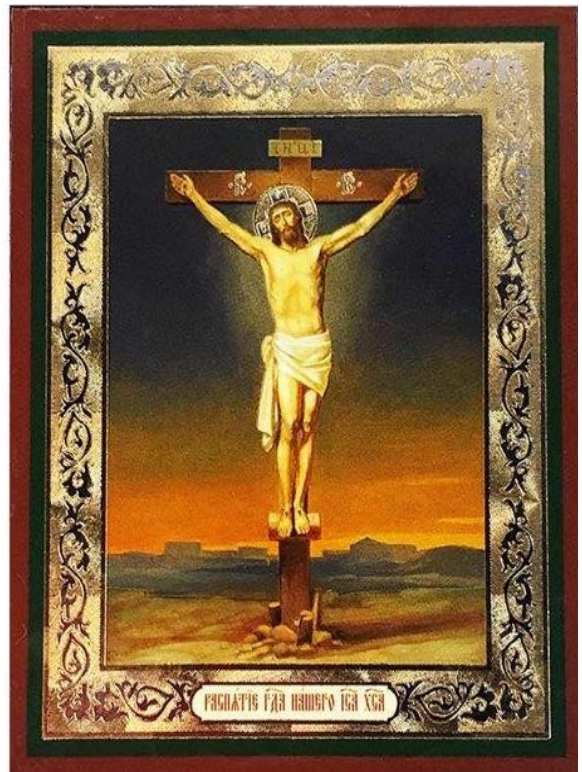


- Lazarus suffered at the gate of a rich man and was ignored.
- In the afterlife, Lazarus is in heaven and the rich man suffers.
- The rich man did not seek God in the suffering of Lazarus.
- A vast chasm=lack of compassion separated the rich man from Lazarus and from God.
- “Luxury leads to forgetfulness” (St. John Chrysostom)
- Suffering can lead to happiness

Christ's Passion

- Christ shows us how to overcome sin with love and achieve happiness.
- Aquinas: Christ suffered for two reasons:
 1. As a remedy for sin. The Passion is a great act of love which bridges the gap between us and God.
 2. As a model for behavior (charity, patience, humility, obedience, despising earthly things). Evil can be overcome by love.
 - 3.

Our Response



- We respond with contrition for our sins and compassion for others.
- “...put on Christ” (St. Paul, Galatians 3:27) • This builds fellowship with men and love for God.
- Love turns suffering into sacrifice.
- God make Himself available in the Sacraments.
- “To receive a sacrament is to enter into communion with the act which made the events of Christ’s life saving mysteries and enfolds the whole mystery of the Church” (Colman O’Neil)

Consider the following examples:

Fall of Communism



- Communism is a metaphor for sin by its rejection of religion, materialism, and desire for absolute power.
- 1940's to 1980's communism seemed impossible to overcome.
- People peacefully united their suffering to others and to Christ.

- "...it was a struggle born of prayer and it would have been unthinkable without immense trust in God...by uniting his own suffering for the sake of truth and freedom to the sufferings of Christ on the Cross that man is able to accomplish the miracle of peace..." (John Paul II)

The Civil Rights Movement



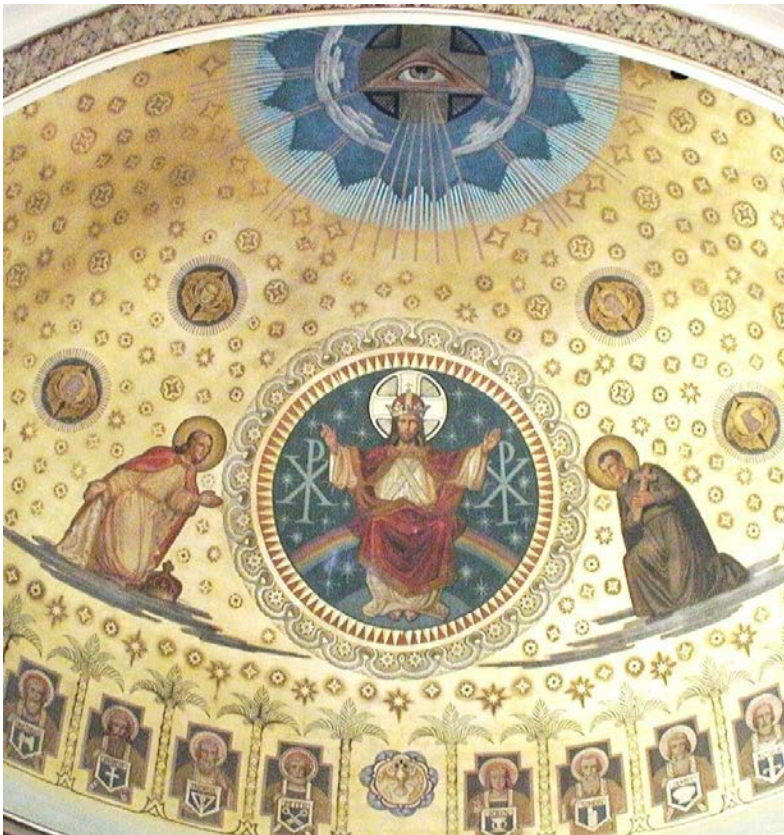
- Opposition to 2nd class status for blacks started in the churches.
- Martin Luther King appealed to whites based on our shared Christian faith.

Struggles for Freedom

- From the American Revolution, to WW2, to Ukraine today, many have fought and died for freedom from tyranny.
- People find the courage to struggle for a better life in their religion.
- Freedom is the ability to live a good life.



Bring God into our Lives



- Our separation from God is seen in many stories and metaphors.
- These stories communicate a sense of sin and call for our response.
- We must recognize sin and suffering and overcome it by love and faith.
- Our world is not just fallen and painfilled but also contains the incarnation of God and the hope this offers to us. Our experience of sin, suffering, and renewal point us to our final redemption and happiness, which is accomplished by uniting ourselves to Christ.

Questions?

Next Week: God and Creation, Chapters 5 & 6

Closing Prayer

Additional Readings

- Fall of Man: Genesis 3:1-24
- Suffering of Job: Book of Job
- Lazarus and the Rich Man: Luke 16:19-31 •
- Passion of Christ: Matthew 24:34-44, Mark 15:23-32, Luke 23:33-43, John 19:18-27
- Fall of Communism: John Paul II, Centesimus Annus, Ch. 3, The Year 1989
- Civil Rights Movement: Martin Luther King, Letter from a Birmingham Jail