

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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Link to Liturgy**



[1] Pope John Paul II the Great – General Audience of February 6, 1980 – 17.5

[2] Pope John Paul II the Great – *Centesimus Annus*; Section 39

Quick Connect

What is the Gospel saying? Matthew 4:12-23 — 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 – Matthew 4:12-23 – Roman Missal

When Jesus heard that John had been arrested, he withdrew to Galilee. He left Nazareth and went to live in Capernaum by the sea, in the region of Zebulun and Naphtali, that what had been said through Isaiah the prophet might be fulfilled. Land of Zebulun and land of Naphtali, the way to the sea, beyond the Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles, the people who sit in darkness have seen a great light, on those dwelling in a land overshadowed by death light has arisen. From that time on, Jesus began to preach and say, “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.” As he was walking by the Sea of Galilee, he saw two brothers, Simon who is called Peter, and his brother Andrew, casting a net into the sea; they were fishermen. He said to them, “Come after me, and I will make you fishers of men.” At once they left their nets and followed him. He walked along from there and saw two other brothers, James, the Son of Zebedee, and his brother John. They were in a boat, with their father Zebedee, mending their nets. He called them, and immediately they left their boat and their father and followed him. He went around all of Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom, and curing every disease and illness among the people.

Spiritual Reading – Office of Readings (Third Sunday in Ordinary Time)

From the constitution on the sacred Liturgy of the Second Vatican Council Christ is always present to his Church, especially in the actions of the liturgy. He is present in the sacrifice of the Mass, in the person of the minister (it is the same Christ who formerly offered Himself on the cross that now offers by the ministry of priests) and most of all under the Eucharistic species. He is present in the sacraments by His power, in such a way that when someone baptizes, Christ Himself baptizes. He is present in His word, for it is He Himself who speaks when the Holy Scriptures are read in the Church. Finally, He is present when the Church prays and sings, for He himself promised: Where two or three are gathered in my name, I am there in their midst. Indeed, in this great work which gives perfect glory to God and brings holiness to men, Christ is always joining in partnership with Himself, His beloved Bride, the Church, which calls upon its Lord and through Him gives worship to the eternal Father. It is therefore right to see the liturgy as an exercise of the priestly office of Jesus Christ, in which through signs addressed to the senses man’s sanctification is signified and, in a way

proper to each of these signs, made effective, and in which public worship is celebrated in its fullness by the mystical body of Jesus Christ, that is, by the head and by His members.

We are a Gift! - Lesson and Discussion

“Come after me, and I will make you fishers of men”

We are the Church. The Church is born from the side of Christ, just as Eve was born from the side of Adam. Eve was the “gift” received by Adam. We are the “gift” received by Christ. In the Gospel, Jesus not only calls Peter, Andrew, James and John, but also receives them. He not only receives them but also wants to perfect them, make them into something greater than they are currently. Jesus calls, He receives and He perfects the gift of self. He did this with the apostles and He desires to call, receive, and make us into what we are meant to be. We are called, received, and made into the people we are meant to be so that we can be given to the world. This way, we can go out and be fishers of men. By being the person we are meant to be, we will draw others to our self. Since we are united with Christ, we will be drawing others truly not to our self but to Christ who lives within us.

We see the love of Christ toward His Church prefigured in the Story of Adam and Eve. Adam prefigures Christ while Eve prefigures the Church.

“Genesis 2:23-25 allows us to deduce that, due to original innocence, the woman, who is the mystery of creation ‘is given’ by the Creator to the man, is ‘welcomed’ or accepted by him as a gift. The biblical text is completely clear and transparent at this point. At the same time, the acceptance of the woman by the man and the very way of accepting her become, as it were, a first gift in such a way that the woman, in giving herself (from the very first moment, in which, in the mystery of creation, she had been ‘given’ by the Creator to the man), at the same time ‘discovers herself,’ thanks to the fact that she has been accepted and welcomed and thanks to the way in which she had been received by the man. She therefore finds herself in her own gift of self (‘through a sincere gift of self,’ *Gaudium et Spes*, 24:3) when she has been accepted in the way in which the Creator willed her, namely, ‘for her own sake,’ through her humanity and femininity; she comes to the innermost depth of her own person and to the full possession of herself when, in this acceptance, the whole dignity of the gift is ensured through the offer of what she is in the whole truth of her humanity and in the whole reality of her body and her sex, of her femininity. We add that this finding of oneself in one’s own gift becomes the source of a new gift of self that grows by the power of the inner disposition to the exchange of the gift and in the measure in which it encounters the same and even deeper acceptance and welcome as the fruit of an ever more intense consciousness of the gift itself.”[27]

What is the Pope saying? God gave Eve to Adam. The fact that she

was given to Adam by God helps her to know that she is of value, of worth. When we give something, we give something that is of worth. For example when a sports player is traded to another team for a large amount of money, he is given up. In the act of the trade, the worth and value of the player is made known or demonstrated. Eve was not only given, but she was accepted and welcomed by Adam. The fact that she was accepted and welcomed helps her to know that she is of value, of worth. This affirmation caused her to realize the gift she was and to give it more and freely.

In our life, how are we given? How are we accepted and welcomed? We are willing to give the gift of our self when we feel appreciated (accepted and welcomed). We become shy, reserved and hesitant to give the gift of our self when we are not accepted or welcomed, when we are not appreciated.

What is the role of the family in accepting and welcoming the gift of self? The family is the sanctuary of life and the first place in which a vocation is nurtured. “It is necessary to go back to seeing the family as the sanctuary of life. The family is indeed sacred: it is the place in which life – the gift of God – can be properly welcomed and protected against the many attacks to which it is exposed, and can develop in accordance with what constitutes authentic human growth. In the fact of the so-called culture of death, the family is the heart of the culture of life.”[28]

In Genesis, the woman is born from the side of the man. Similarly, the Church is born from the pierced side of our Crucified Lord, a birth coming forth from the waters of Baptism and the blood of sacrificial love. The fruit of the Son’s gift of self is the Church, which is given by the Son (His gift of self on the Cross), accepted by the Father, and confirmed by the Holy Spirit.

If we look at Adam as Christ and Eve as the Church, we see the following. There is an acceptance of the Church by Christ. The Church, by giving herself, at the same time discovers herself, thanks to the fact that she has been accepted, welcomed and received by Christ. The Church finds herself in her own gift of self, a gift that comes from the Father, through the Son and confirmed by the Holy Spirit and then is given back. Each person is “born again” from the blood and water. Each person is incorporated in the Body of Christ the Church and gives his or herself (the gift of self) to the Father. It is the role of the Church who has been accepted, welcomed and received by Christ, to give itself to the world.