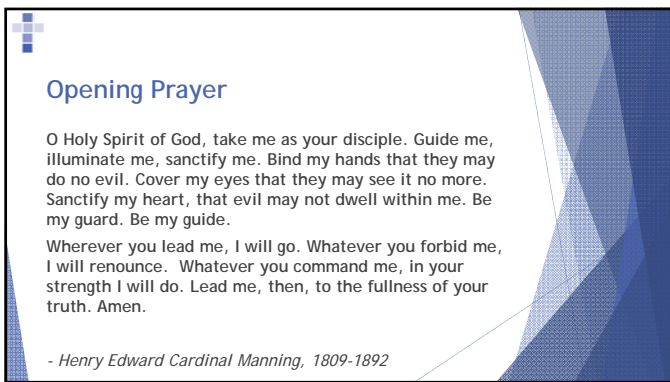


Catholic Discipleship
Unit 4: Relationship

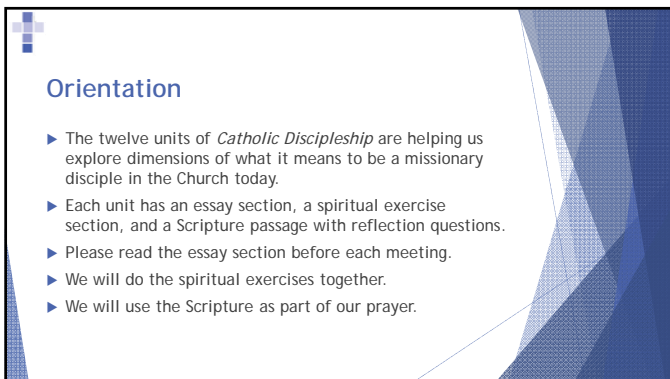


Opening Prayer

O Holy Spirit of God, take me as your disciple. Guide me, illuminate me, sanctify me. Bind my hands that they may do no evil. Cover my eyes that they may see it no more. Sanctify my heart, that evil may not dwell within me. Be my guard. Be my guide.


Wherever you lead me, I will go. Whatever you forbid me, I will renounce. Whatever you command me, in your strength I will do. Lead me, then, to the fullness of your truth. Amen.

- Henry Edward Cardinal Manning, 1809-1892



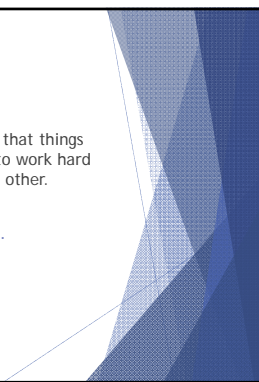
Orientation

- ▶ The twelve units of *Catholic Discipleship* are helping us explore dimensions of what it means to be a missionary disciple in the Church today.
- ▶ Each unit has an essay section, a spiritual exercise section, and a Scripture passage with reflection questions.
- ▶ Please read the essay section before each meeting.
- ▶ We will do the spiritual exercises together.
- ▶ We will use the Scripture as part of our prayer.



Objectives


- ▶ To think about the importance of relationship
- ▶ To examine the various assumptions about relationship in modern culture
- ▶ To elaborate the sense of "isolation" and the sense of "connection"
- ▶ To reflect on God as the basis of all relationship
- ▶ To discuss the Holy Trinity



Relationship

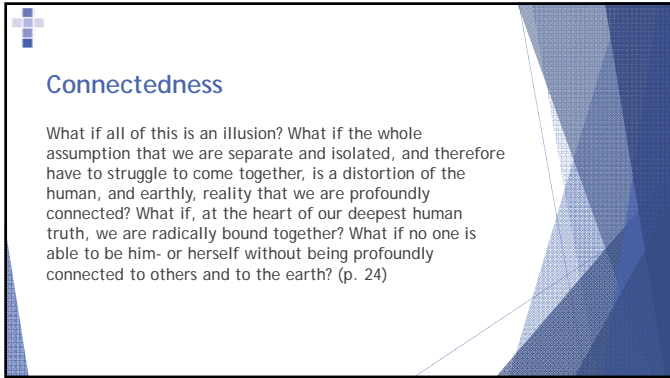
We have always thought that the problem was that things were not connected to each other and we had to work hard to put those things into contact with each other.

That we are basically unconnected.



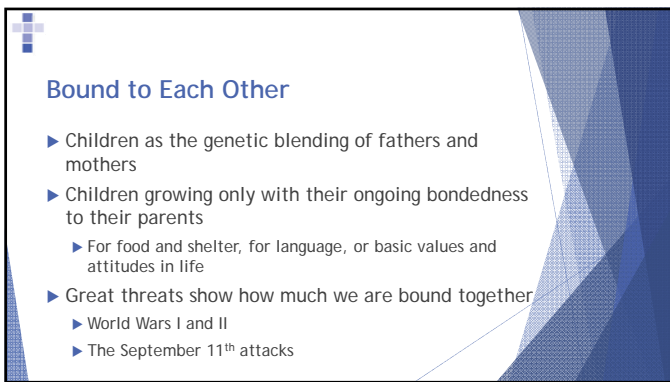
Isolation

- ▶ The example of the breakup of marriage: 40% of marriages end in divorce.
- ▶ The divisions between groups of people:
 - ▶ Political, Racial, Cultural, Economic
 - ▶ The 1% v. the 99%, the 10% v. the 90%
- ▶ Divisions within our families
 - ▶ Children develop different "cultures"
 - ▶ Children separate from parents



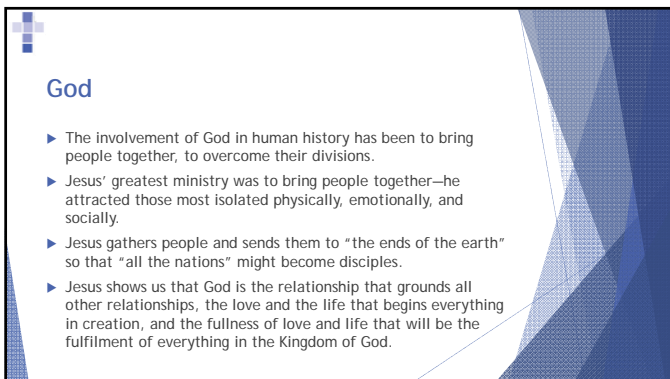
Connectedness

What if all of this is an illusion? What if the whole assumption that we are separate and isolated, and therefore have to struggle to come together, is a distortion of the human, and earthly, reality that we are profoundly connected? What if, at the heart of our deepest human truth, we are radically bound together? What if no one is able to be him- or herself without being profoundly connected to others and to the earth? (p. 24)



Bound to Each Other

- ▶ Children as the genetic blending of fathers and mothers
- ▶ Children growing only with their ongoing bondedness to their parents
 - ▶ For food and shelter, for language, or basic values and attitudes in life
- ▶ Great threats show how much we are bound together
 - ▶ World Wars I and II
 - ▶ The September 11th attacks



God

- ▶ The involvement of God in human history has been to bring people together, to overcome their divisions.
- ▶ Jesus' greatest ministry was to bring people together—he attracted those most isolated physically, emotionally, and socially.
- ▶ Jesus gathers people and sends them to “the ends of the earth” so that “all the nations” might become disciples.
- ▶ Jesus shows us that God is the relationship that grounds all other relationships, the love and the life that begins everything in creation, and the fullness of love and life that will be the fulfilment of everything in the Kingdom of God.

Moses

The Lord used to speak to Moses face to face, as a person speaks to a friend (Exodus 33:10).

Do you ever feel that you have an intimacy with God similar to the one that Moses had?

What are the moments when you have felt this?

God as Trinity

- ▶ To say that God is Trinity is to say that the very being of God is relationship.
 - ▶ God the Father lives for God the Son.
 - ▶ God the Father and the Son express their life through the Holy Spirit who is the bond of love between Father and Son.
 - ▶ This relationship is infinite and dynamic, the ground from which everything comes, the model behind all creation.
- ▶ God as Trinity=God as Relation=God as the foundation of all relationship in existence

Spiritual Exercise (p. 28)

Scripture—1 Corinthians 12:12-18

As a body is one though it has many parts, and all the parts of the body, though many, are one body, so also Christ. For in one Spirit we were all baptized into one body, whether Jews or Greeks, slaves or free persons, and we were all given to drink of one Spirit. Now the body is not a single part, but many. If a foot should say, "Because I am not a hand I do not belong to the body," it does not for this reason belong any less to the body. Or if an ear should say, "Because I am not an eye I do not belong to the body," it does not for this reason belong any less to the body. If the whole body were an eye, where would the hearing be? If the whole body were hearing, where would the sense of smell be? But as it is, God placed the parts, each one of them, in the body as he intended.

Conclusion

- ▶ Thank you for coming and participating.
- ▶ Please think of bringing a friend along next week.
- ▶ Remember to bring your Bible the next three weeks. If you need help getting a Bible, see me after our session.
- ▶ We invite you to spend some time in hospitality after our session.
- ▶ Please stand and recite together the Catholic Discipleship prayer and the Lord's Prayer.

Catholic Discipleship Prayer

Lord, God, through our baptisms you have made us disciples, followers of Jesus who attend to his Word, pray and worship in his Spirit, experience love in his community of the Church, and are sent to serve by helping others as he did. Lead us, Father, more fully into your Kingdom, which Jesus came to begin and fulfill. Help us, through his Spirit, to adhere to him and bring his Good News to all we encounter. We pray this in his name. Amen.

Our Father...
