

**Catholic Discipleship**  
Unit 7: Mount Calvary

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**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

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**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.

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**Objectives**

- ▶ To get a better grasp of the New Testament
- ▶ To interpret Jesus in terms of the Paschal Mystery (his Death and Resurrection)
- ▶ To find a simpler way to organize our thinking about Jesus and the effects of his life
- ▶ To begin to grasp all Catholic life as an effect of Jesus' Death and Resurrection through the gift of the Holy Spirit

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**Central Message of New Testament**

God reached out to us in Jesus Christ, Son and perfect image of the Father; Jesus was rejected and murdered as a criminal. Through this obedient act of love, God raised Jesus from the dead and, through Jesus, continues to transform the world by the gift of the Spirit, by which, as a Church, we continue Christ's mission.

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**Mount Calvary**

1. What led up to the crucifixion of Jesus
2. What is involved in Jesus' death and resurrection
3. What has developed from Mount Calvary

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**What Led Up to Calvary**

- ▶ Jesus' ministry begins as a follow-up to the mission of John the Baptist... a time of expectation and a message of hope.
- ▶ Jesus proclaims a Kingdom of God and inaugurates it in his speech and his actions, especially those actions that reveal the power of God.
  - ▶ We call these "miracles," but John the Evangelist calls them "signs."
- ▶ Jesus teaches us complete trust in God (Sermon on the Mount).
- ▶ Jesus gathers followers and forms them into a community.
- ▶ Some religious leaders take offense at his words and actions.

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**What Led Up to Calvary**

- ▶ Jesus understands the opposition of others as a call to give his life in witness to the Kingdom of God.
  - ▶ "A prophet cannot die outside Jerusalem" (Luke 13:33).
  - ▶ "The Son of Man must suffer greatly . . ." (Mark 8:31).
- ▶ Jesus raises people from the dead as a sign of God's victory over death.
- ▶ He dies as an act of trust in his Father.

Can you place yourself in the hope, and opposition, that Jesus' mission brought about in the lives of people?

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**What Happened on Calvary**

There are many layers to the death and resurrection of Jesus.

- 1) It was a political murder done out of convenience.
- 2) It showed the ultimate conflict between good and evil, anticipating our final judgment.
- 3) It demonstrated God's gift of reconciliation to all of humankind.
- 4) It revealed the selfless love of God through Jesus' obedient emptying of himself, thereby reversing human rejection of God.

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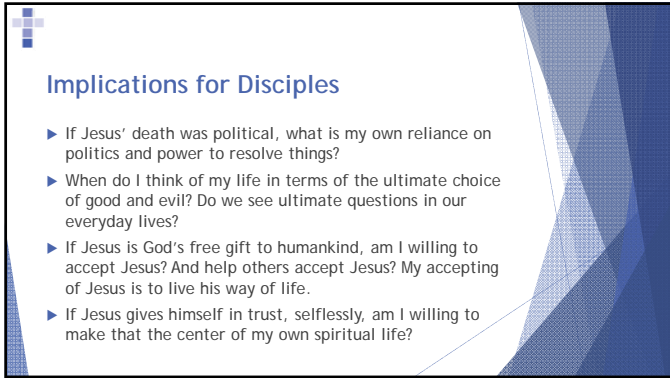
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### Implications for Disciples

- ▶ If Jesus' death was political, what is my own reliance on politics and power to resolve things?
- ▶ When do I think of my life in terms of the ultimate choice of good and evil? Do we see ultimate questions in our everyday lives?
- ▶ If Jesus is God's free gift to humankind, am I willing to accept Jesus? And help others accept Jesus? My accepting of Jesus is to live his way of life.
- ▶ If Jesus gives himself in trust, selflessly, am I willing to make that the center of my own spiritual life?

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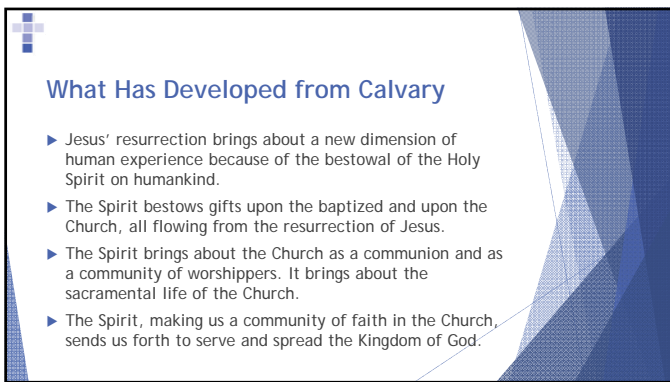
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### What Has Developed from Calvary

- ▶ Jesus' resurrection brings about a new dimension of human experience because of the bestowal of the Holy Spirit on humankind.
- ▶ The Spirit bestows gifts upon the baptized and upon the Church, all flowing from the resurrection of Jesus.
- ▶ The Spirit brings about the Church as a communion and as a community of worshippers. It brings about the sacramental life of the Church.
- ▶ The Spirit, making us a community of faith in the Church, sends us forth to serve and spread the Kingdom of God.

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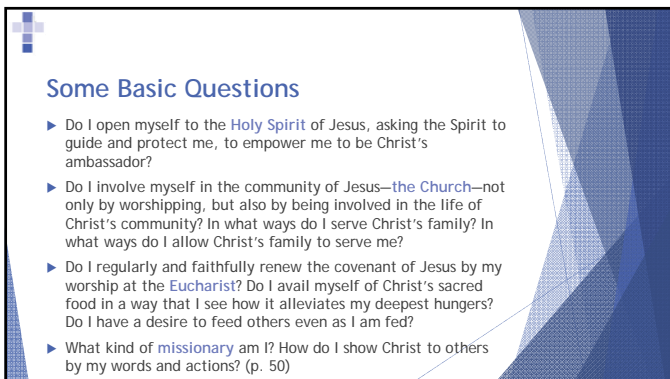
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### Some Basic Questions

- ▶ Do I open myself to the Holy Spirit of Jesus, asking the Spirit to guide and protect me, to empower me to be Christ's ambassador?
- ▶ Do I involve myself in the community of Jesus—the Church—not only by worshipping, but also by being involved in the life of Christ's community? In what ways do I serve Christ's family? In what ways do I allow Christ's family to serve me?
- ▶ Do I regularly and faithfully renew the covenant of Jesus by my worship at the Eucharist? Do I avail myself of Christ's sacred food in a way that I see how it alleviates my deepest hungers? Do I have a desire to feed others even as I am fed?
- ▶ What kind of missionary am I? How do I show Christ to others by my words and actions? (p. 50)

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### Scripture—Luke 9:28-36

About eight days after he said this, he took Peter, John, and James and went up the mountain to pray. While he was praying his face changed in appearance and his clothing became dazzling white. And behold, two men were conversing with him, Moses and Elijah, who appeared in glory and spoke of his exodus that he was going to accomplish in Jerusalem. Peter and his companions had been overcome by sleep, but becoming fully awake, they saw his glory and the two men standing with him. As they were about to part from him, Peter said to Jesus, "Master, it is good that we are here; let us make three tents, one for you, one for Moses, and one for Elijah." But he did not know what he was saying. While he was still speaking, a cloud came and cast a shadow over them, and they became frightened when they entered the cloud. Then from the cloud came a voice that said, "This is my chosen Son; listen to him." After the voice had spoken, Jesus was found alone. They fell silent and did not at that time tell anyone what they had seen.

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### Spiritual Exercise (p. 51)

With the images of the Transfiguration in mind, begin to follow these suggestions.

- ▶ Take in the images.
- ▶ Follow the shifts between light and darkness.
- ▶ Ask with whom in the passage you feel kinship the most.
- ▶ Try to determine what your attitude would have been if you were there.
- ▶ What word or phrase stays in your mind?
- ▶ Say a prayer from your heart in response to the Gospel passage.

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### Psalm 8

O Lord, our Lord, how awesome is your name through all the earth! I will sing of your majesty above the heavens with the mouths of babes and infants. You have established a bulwark against your foes, to silence enemy and avenger.

When I see your heavens, the work of your fingers, the moon and stars that you set in place—What is man that you are mindful of him, and a son of man that you care for him?

Yet you have made him little less than a god, crowned him with glory and honor. You have given him rule over the works of your hands, put all things at his feet: All sheep and oxen, even the beasts of the field, the birds of the air, the fish of the sea, and whatever swims the paths of the seas.

O Lord, our Lord, how awesome is your name through all the earth!

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### Conclusion

- ▶ Thank you for coming and participating.
- ▶ Please think of bringing a friend along next week.
- ▶ You may bring your Bible next week, although we will be focusing on other themes of discipleship, such as prayer.
- ▶ 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.

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### 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...*

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