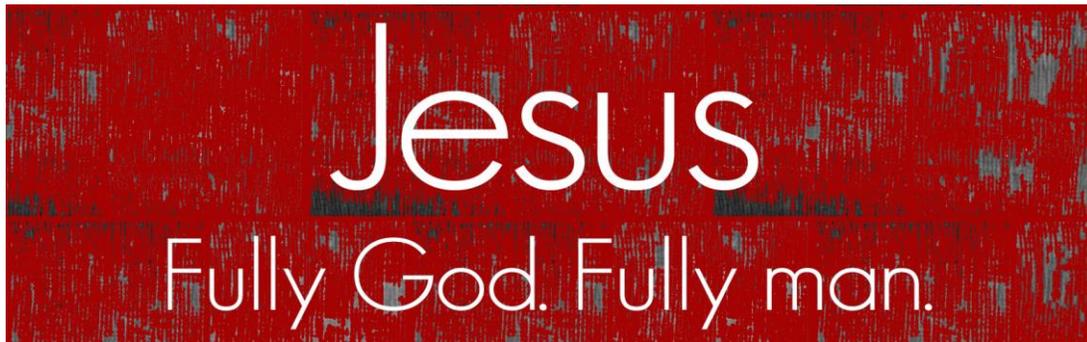


ONEWITH

OneWith community, OneWith faith, OneWith Christ.

February 21, 2021

Reflection Break Outline Grade 9 ~ Session #10



Session Goals

Catholicism Unpacked:

Youth will explore the history and meaning of the Nicene Creed.

Youth will break down the “Jesus Statements” of the Creed and reflect on their “theological” and “applied” meanings.

- Jesus is the only Son of God (a singularity)
- Jesus is fully human/Fully God (“Hypostatic Union”)
- Is God and Creator (with the Father, Co-Creator of all things)
- Jesus is the Messiah prophesied in the Scriptures.
- Jesus is One-with/inseparable from the Trinity

Scripture Unpacked:

- Articulate the meaning of a Scripture passage from the Sunday readings (or homily).
- Reflect on *and articulate* at least 1 way these lessons could apply to contemporary life.
- Make a Lenten commitments to **Fast, Pray, and Give** aid to the Poor this Lent (*yep, that’s 3 separate commitments from now till Easter*).

Ice Breaker Activity / Questions (about 5 minutes)

OneWith format is a very different way of exploring the Catholic faith and experiencing liturgy. Peer-to-peer witnessing is a critical part of the discipleship process – but such authentic sharing does not happen easily. It may take a few or perhaps many sessions for your group to build trust in each other and become comfortable with this new format for exploring their faith.

- *Take a few minutes to help everyone get to know each other and feel as comfortable as one can, given the current circumstances...*
- *Try some “softball questions” to get them talking... Favorite activity/moment of the week,*

Pro Tip: *Some established groups have a standard faith question that they use as an opener. In addition to creating a known question/topic that the youth can reliably anticipate being discussed, you also build in the expectation that everyone will be expected to share.*

- *What was your “God-Moment” since the last time we met.*
- *1-5... On a scale of one (“Where the heck are you?”) to five (“We’re like this!” - side-by-side fingers)... Where are you and God right now?*
- *Who did you bless this week? / Who blessed you?*
- *How did you do on your “Discipleship Commitment” from our last session? (more on that below)*

Would you Rather...

Would you rather give up your phone for a month or give up “snacking” for a month?

Would you rather have only two close friends or many acquaintances?

Would you rather be known as the best student in school or be the captain of one of the sport teams?

Would you rather always have to sing instead of speaking or dance everywhere you went?

Would you rather be very short or extremely tall?

Would you rather be invisible or be able to fly?

Would you rather live one hundred years in the future or one hundred years in the past?

Would you rather be the best player on a losing team or the worst player on a winning team?

Would you rather be stranded on an island with someone really annoying or stranded all alone?

Would you rather have friends that are smarter than you or much better looking than you?

Would you rather win an Olympic Gold Medal or an Academy Award?

Would you rather go skiing in the winter or to the beach in the summer?

More “Would You Rather” Questions:

<https://www.signupgenius.com/groups/would-you-rather-questions-teens.cfm>

<https://icebreakerideas.com/would-you-rather-questions/>

More games and activities:

- <https://www.jubed.com/9-Icebreakers-Thatll-Leave-Your-Group-Buzzing>
- <https://teens.lovetoknow.com/teen-activities/youth-icebreakers-without-materials>
- <https://www.thereligionteacher.com/catholic-ice-breakers/>

Catholicism Unpacked (12-15 minutes)

"I Believe..."

Over the next few sessions we will be revisiting the conversations that we had at the beginning of the year about God, Jesus and the Holy Spirit. This session you will reflect on the Church's nearly 2000 years of wisdom concerning the nature of God in the form of the Nicene Creed. These next few sessions will ask our youth to consider the wisdom of the Creed, compare that with their own experience, and begin to wrestle with the resulting questions or conflicting ideologies. This reflection will be an important part of your Discipleship Group's project to craft your own credo on God, Jesus, the Trinity and the Church.

~ Barry

More than 1,600 years ago, the Council of Nicaea brought bishops from all over the Christian world to clarify and put into writing the basic beliefs about the nature of God, Jesus, the Holy Spirit and the role of the unified Church. The result of their work was series of statements about that all of the Churches could agree on... it is called the Nicene Creed (I'm sure you've heard of it and even said it yourself...

Use the handout on pg. 6 to read through the Nicene Creed together. I will also send this to you as a separate document in case you want to send it as an attachment to teens/parents or screen share on Zoom.

Let's break it down... *(Break down the "Jesus Statements" of the Creed and reflect on their "theological" and "applied" meanings).*

"I believe in..."

- *One Lord - Jesus Christ; the Only Begotten (Only human born) Son of God,*
- *born of the Father before all ages (beginning of time).*
- *God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God (fully God), begotten not made (born/fully human),*
- *consubstantial (one-with/same essence) with the Father (God);*
- *through him all things were made (Jesus/God are inseparable creators of all things).*
- *For us men (all humanity) and for our salvation he came down from heaven, and by the Holy Spirit was incarnate of (given human life through) the Virgin Mary, and became man (Fully Human/Fully God).*
- *For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate, he suffered death and was buried (John 18:28-19:42) and rose again on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures (Jesus is the foretold Messiah proclaimed throughout the scriptures).*
- *He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father (One-with/inseparable from the Trinity)*
- *He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead and his kingdom will have no end (eternal).*

(Please Note: The parenthetical comments are Barry's crude interpretations - intended to be helpful, not necessarily theologically precise)

Reflection: Building your own Creed...

Looking at the Church's list of things that we believe about Jesus...

- What stands out to you about this list?
- Does anything not make sense to you?

Compare this list with the one you made earlier this year...

- What is similar? What is different?
- Do any of these qualities conflict? Explain.
- Re-work your list of top 4-6 qualities/attributes that you can all agree on.

9th Grade Creed Project

Putting it together...

It may seem a little daunting but it is time to start building your own creed. And while this is a statement of faith that you can personally believe in, it should also be “open” enough that the whole Church can embrace.

- Although there are no restrictions on how you compose your creed (we have had “rap” creeds, illustrated creeds, etc.), you may find it useful to use the Nicene Creed as a model for your group’s creed.
- Each creed should contain...
 - 2-3 statements you believe about God;
 - 4-6 statements you believe about Jesus;
 - A few statements to explain about the Holy Spirit and role of the Church.
 - *Since we don’t 1,600 years to evaluate YOUR creed – we are going to use the Nicene Creed as the “gold standard”. In other words, if your creed is “in conflict” with the Nicene Creed – you are going to want to reconsider your statement of faith.*
 - Watch your language! The meaning of words can sometimes mean different things to different people. Make sure to review your creed and consider how the words you have chosen might be misinterpreted by others.

Here is the **Creed Project timeline**...

- You should make it your group’s goal to have a *working draft* by the end **March**.
- Barry will collect each group’s creed (draft) and submit them to Fr. Mike who will look at them and offer some points for reflection.
- Your group will have a chance finalize your creed at our **April 11th** session.
- At our **April 25th** session we will have a “**Mini-Ecumenical Council**” either in person (hopefully) or via Zoom. Each group will present and distribute a copy of their creed (final draft) to the rest of the 9th grade groups. This will allow you to evaluate (compare/contrast) and reflect on the creeds of all of the other groups in order to gain a deeper understanding of what we *REALLY* believe about God, Jesus, the Holy Spirit and the role of the Church community.

Scripture Unpacked (10-15 minutes)

As Catholics, we believe that the Bible is the living Word of God. That alone should give us reason to pay attention, but there's more! Scripture offers us lessons and wisdom that can be beneficial to OUR lives – right now!

The First Reading, from Genesis, and the Gospel this week need to be looked at together. In both readings there is a sense of a fresh start—a clean slate—for humankind. It is a clear indication of God's commitment to humanity, even when we have totally distanced ourselves from God and forgotten about keeping up our part of the relationship, God is willing to make a clean start of it all again. Both readings offer a reminder of God's constant desire for us to be in right relationship with God and with the world.

In the gospel passage, we have a picture of Jesus preparing himself for his public ministry. He takes himself out into the wilderness, away from all that he has known until this time, to reflect on his life so far and this next vital stage that he is about to enter. In the wilderness, Jesus is tempted. He has to face his own doubts and demons before he sets off on the road of his public ministry. When he leaves the desert wilderness and enters back into Galilee he immediately begins to preach and, in the first words accredited to him in this gospel, Jesus announces that the kingdom of God is at hand and it's time to repent and believe!

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Digging Deeper - Scripture Questions

Choose and discuss one or more of the following questions:

- Why do you think it necessary for Jesus to go out into the wilderness before he began his public ministry?
- What does it mean to you to know that Jesus was capable of being tempted?
- What did Jesus mean when he said, "The kingdom of God is at hand"?

Homily: What was the main point of the Priest/Deacon's homily? How does that message tie back to the bible readings and/or your life?

Scripture Application Questions

Disciples Do! The "Discipleship Challenge" asks our youth to take the practical lesson/wisdom that they have discerned from the Scripture readings (aka – the Bible) and/or the homily – and apply that in the context of their own lived experience.

Note: We are looking for something specific/concrete for them to commit to. "Being a better person" would be too generic... We also want to stay away from "praying" or "praying for someone" - We certainly want them to pray, but prayer is a separate practice of discipleship. If a youth is having problems coming up with something, start with their learned lesson/wisdom and work from there. The point here is to put faith into action by working up a tangible way for them to become agents of mercy, justice and love in their families, among their friends and in our world.

"Discipleship Challenge"

- What is one "practical lesson" or bit of wisdom that YOU can take away from the Bible readings and/or homily?
- How will you **Fast, Pray, and Give** aid to the Poor this Lent (*yep, that's 3 separate commitments from now till Easter*)?

OneWith Resources

Resource Videos:

Articles to get you thinking about ways to explain the Nicene Creed...

- How to Teach the Nicene Creed without Hosting a Snore-fest (*Clever Blog post*). <https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/how-teach-nicene-creed-without-hosting-snore-fest-emily-jeffries/>
- Why do Catholics pray the Creed (*LifeTeen Blog post*). <https://lifeteen.com/blog/why-do-catholics-pray-the-creed/>
- The Nicene Creed: Symbol of the Catholic Faith (*phrase-by-phrase breakdown*): <https://catholic-link.org/the-nicene-creed-explained/>

Gospel Reflection (Video)

Reflection on the 1st Sunday of Lent (*Jeff Cavins – Bible Scholar, Author and SJTW parishioner!*)

<https://media.ascensionpress.com/video/the-first-sunday-of-lent-b/>

Creed Videos...

- What is the Nicene Creed (*One Minute Apologist – If you have not already used it...*) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5afgRuqWbEg>
- The Trinity Explained in Under 3 Minutes (*Bob Rice*) - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KHF-y84rgIM>
- “Creed” (*Music Video – 3rd Day & Brandon Heath*) - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=i3i-VWxOAc>

Links for total nerds

- Hypostatic Union (*a great 2 min. talk on the two natures of Jesus by Bishop Barron*) - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qX7q3yDoFDo>
- Trinity Explained in 3 Minutes (*nice explanation of C.S. Lewis multi-dimensional analogy*) - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AQkFlzFJ3kA>
- What is the Trinity? (*Bishop Barron*) - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hMI4rA4cuiM>
- Just for fun! St. Patrick's Bad Analogies (*One of my favorite videos ever!*) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KQLfqaUoQCw>

Sunday Readings:

Reading #1: Genesis 9:8-15

Responsorial Psalm: 25:4-9

Reading #2: I Peter 3:18-22

Gospel: Mark 1:12-15

A full copy of the readings for the week can be found on the U.S. Bishop's website:

<https://bible.usccb.org/bible/readings/022121.cfm>

The Nicene Creed

*I believe in one God,
the Father almighty,
maker of heaven and earth,
of all things visible and invisible.*

*I believe in one Lord Jesus Christ,
the Only Begotten Son of God,
born of the Father before all ages.
God from God, Light from Light,
true God from true God,
begotten, not made, consubstantial with the Father;
through him all things were made.
For us men and for our salvation
he came down from heaven,
and by the Holy Spirit was incarnate of the Virgin Mary,
and became man.*

*For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate,
he suffered death and was buried,
and rose again on the third day
in accordance with the Scriptures.
He ascended into heaven
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.
He will come again in glory
to judge the living and the dead
and his kingdom will have no end.*

*I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father and the Son,
who with the Father and the Son is adored and glorified,
who has spoken through the prophets.*

*I believe in one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church.
I confess one Baptism for the forgiveness of sins
and I look forward to the resurrection of the dead
and the life of the world to come. Amen.*

Gospel Reflection

The First Reading, from Genesis, and the Gospel this week need to be looked at together. In the Genesis reading, God has just wiped clean the earth and is ready to re-establish the relationship with humanity through Noah and his family. In the short gospel passage, Jesus enters the wilderness as a time of preparation and renewal, ready to embark on his mission of reestablishing the relationship between God and humanity. In both readings there is a sense of a fresh start—a clean slate—for humankind. It is a clear indication of God’s commitment to humanity, even when we have totally distanced ourselves from God and forgotten about keeping up our part of the relationship, God is willing to make a clean start of it all again. Both readings offer a reminder of God’s constant desire for us to be in right relationship with God and with the world. The presence of Jesus in the world was as clear a signal as the rainbow in the sky that God was willing to give us another go—give us a chance to again see God with new eyes and new understanding.

In the gospel passage, we have a picture of Jesus preparing himself for his public ministry. He takes himself out into the wilderness, away from all that he has known until this time, to reflect on his life so far and this next vital stage that he is about to enter. In the wilderness, Jesus is tempted. He has to face his own doubts and demons before he sets off on the road of his public ministry. When he leaves the desert wilderness and enters back into Galilee he immediately begins to preach and, in the first words accredited to him in this gospel, Jesus announces that the kingdom of God is at hand and it’s time to repent and believe. It’s a call to open your eyes and get with the program!

Questions for Youth

- Q. Why do you think it necessary for Jesus to go out into the wilderness before he began his public ministry?
- Q. What does it mean to you to know that Jesus was capable of being tempted?
- Q. How can you use Lent as a time to respond to the call to “Repent and believe the Good News”?

Questions for Parents/Sponsors

- Q. What did Jesus mean when he said, “The kingdom of God is at hand”?
- Q. When have you felt that you were in a desert period of your life?
- Q. How do you prepare yourself for something that you know is going to be challenging?
- Q. In what areas of your life do you need to see someone or something with “new eyes”?

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