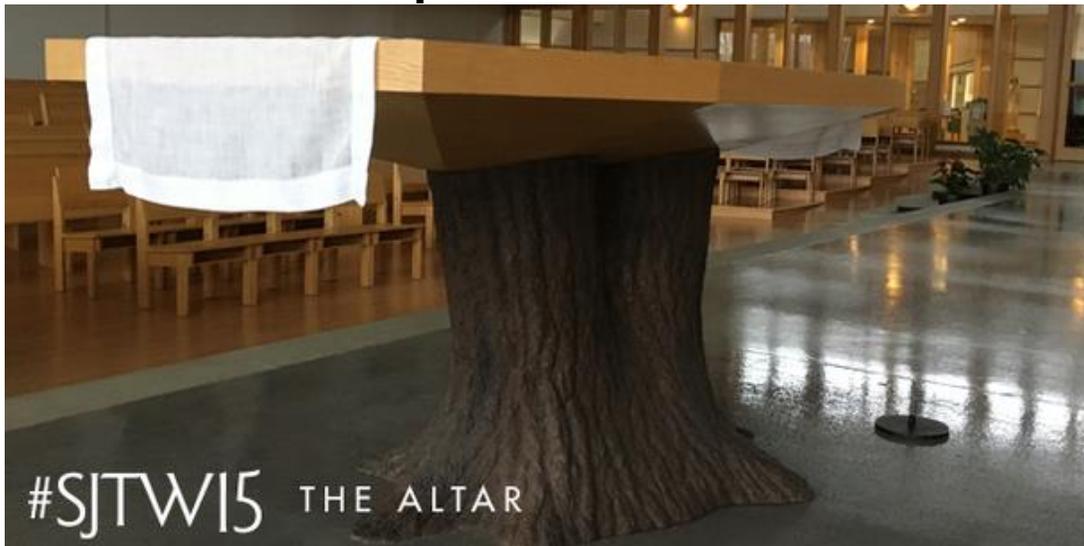


# ONEWITH

OneWith community, OneWith faith, OneWith Christ.

November 22, 2020

## Reflection Break Outline Grade 10-11 ~ Session #4:



### Session Goals

#### Mass Unpacked (Mass Moment):

In the Bible, altars were places of exchange, communication, and influence; places where the divine and human worlds interacted. Jesus' suffering and death was the ultimate sacrifice and is renewed each Mass on the altar. The altar is a table that unites God's people with the New Covenant Jesus gave to us at the Last supper.

#### Mass Learning Outcomes:

- *Catholic altars are always placed in the center of the sanctuary to help focus our attention.*
- *The altar is a place for sacrifice: Where bread and wine are exchanged for God's own life;*
- *The altar is a table that unites us with the New Covenant Jesus gave to us at the Last supper*

#### Catholicism Unpacked

- *Connect the significance of the altar with current understanding of Eucharist.*
- *As a class, continue to develop a "working definition" of the Sacrament of the Eucharist.*

#### Scripture Unpacked:

- *Analyze the gospel reading – discern a value or lesson that is personally relevant.*
- *Reflect on/articulate one or more ways the lesson/value could apply to contemporary life.*
- *Commit to one practice of discipleship that corresponds to the gospel message.*

## **Scripture Unpacked** (10-15 minutes)

*God's Word is more than "oddly phrased" words that people read during Mass... The wisdom and Truth of scripture are just as alive today as they were when they were first scribed millennia ago... The following questions are important to help our young disciples to learn the process of identifying, clarifying and focusing on the MEANING of the scripture passage.*

*Be on the lookout for answers that synthesize "gospel" concepts ("True" forgiveness) with "secular"/cultural beliefs (being nice). This is our (your) chance to correct or put a theological fine point on any misconceptions or perceptions that our teens might have. Ask questions like...*

- *What did you hear in Scripture readings from Mass?*
- *What did you hear in the homily (Fr. Mike's teaching)?*
- *What do you think was Father Mike's main point?*

*Close this part of the lesson by reiterating the teaching focus for the session - see pages 4-5 for more detail and some tips from the experts.*

### **Digging Deeper - Scripture Questions**

- *List some of the conditions that characterize the "least"? Do they still exist today?*
- *What does the parable tell us about the connection between the poor, suffering and marginalized and the "King"? (*They are Him!*)*
- *When have you helped someone in need? What happened /how did it make you feel?*
- *When have you ever failed to help someone in need? Why did you not help?*
- *Compare this reading with Luke 4:16-21. What message is evident in both readings?*
- *What do you think the truth that Jesus is teaching in this parable? (*Whenever you serve the least of people, you serve Christ.*)*

### **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?*
- *What is one thing that you can do in the next two weeks to "be a sheep" for someone who is in need?*

### ***Eucharist – An altar-nate approach to faith***

*In the Bible, altars were places of exchange, communication, and influence; places where the divine and human worlds interacted. Noah built an altar to God, so did Abraham and Solomon. The central feature of the Great Temple in Jerusalem was the altar of sacrifice.*

*At the Last Supper, Jesus' table becomes an altar.*

*Jesus' suffering and death was the ultimate sacrifice to atone for the sin of humanity so Christ's sacrifice is renewed each Mass at an altar. But the altar is also a table. A table that unites us with the New Covenant Jesus gave to us at the Last supper; and to the many tables around which the early Christians celebrated the Eucharist, breaking bread together.*

*This altar is placed here at the center to help us to focus our attention, because what is happening here is significant. We are seated all around so that we can be close and share this Holy Meal together.*

*Finally, just as it has always been, the altar is place of exchange between us and God; between heaven and earth; a spiritual place that stretches the boundaries of time itself!*

*Pay careful attention to what is being said and done here. Here you will hear wisdom and prophecy directly from scripture. It's here where bread and wine are exchanged for God's own life; where we remember and celebrate with the Saints and our loved ones who have passed from this world. This is where Christ becomes nourishment for our body and soul!*

#### **[Group Share]**

- Why are Catholic altars always placed in the front/center of the sanctuary? Why is that important?
- How would you explain to a non-Catholic that the altar is...
  - “a banquet table”
  - “a place of sacrifice”
- Does this add to/change your “working definition” of the sacrament of the Eucharist. Let's continue to evaluate and work on your group's definition as we move through the year...
- What questions do you have about the Sacrament of the Eucharist? (*Barry or Fr. Mike would like the opportunity to help “unpack” this complex theological mystery of our faith.*)

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## Session Goals/Resources

### **Resource Articles:**

Significance of the Altar in Catholic Theology:

<https://www.aquinasandmore.com/catholic-articles/the-altar-in-catholic-liturgy/article/188>

**Sunday Readings:** <https://bible.usccb.org/bible/readings/112220.cfm>

### **For Theology Nerds:**

Sacrifice and Atonement (Bible Project): [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=G\\_OlRWGLdnw](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=G_OlRWGLdnw)

*(Ok, this video might be a little bit of a stretch regarding the significance of the altar, but it is a great video and could lead to an excellent discussion on role of sacrifice in the story of salvation).*

## **Gospel Reflection** - By Greg Sunter

*This week's gospel is the final passage in Matthew's gospel before the passion narrative—the death and resurrection of Jesus. As such, it provides a powerful end point to the teaching ministry section of the gospel. In many ways this passage can be seen as a summary of Jesus' vision for the Kingdom—a world in which the hungry, the thirsty, the stranger, the naked, and the imprisoned are treated with respect and dignity as a child of God. This is exactly what Jesus himself did throughout his ministry and it is what all Christian people are called to do.*

*Like the virtuous people of the passage, there are many times when we do not know the good work that we do. There are many times when our positive interaction with another person can be the difference between hope and despair for that person—and we may never know the difference we have made in their life. The challenge presented by Jesus is that whenever we see a person in need our response to them should be as if we were responding to Jesus himself.*

*But what of the times we fail to respond to the hungry, the thirsty, the stranger, the naked, and the imprisoned? Who are they for us? ... That irritating person who we've never been able to get along with? ... That person who's just arrived in the country and can't speak the language properly? ... That kid who always looks dirty and nobody talks to? ... That girl who's no good at relating to other people and everyone avoids her? ... The homeless man in the street who asks for money? ... The asylum seeker fleeing their country who didn't go through all the right channels to immigrate? ... Lord, when did we see you, and not come to your help?*

## **Gospel Focus—The Final Judgment**

*Often referred to as “The Final Judgment,” this gospel presents an understanding of judgment and punishment that reflects the theology and culture of the first century. It is an image that has continued to dominate Christian art and theology for most of its history: the idea of God sitting in judgment on the final day and weighing up each individual's actions. It is often applied very literally and it is a dominant image of God represented in the media—TV sit-coms and movies often draw on the image. It is a literalist image of God that needs to be challenged. We must remember that the focus of the gospel passage is on the call to action for justice.*

## **Questions for Adults**

- Q. What message or challenge emerges from the gospel passage for you?*
- Q. Which groups are the hungry, thirsty, strangers, naked, and imprisoned today?*
- Q. How can you make a difference to one of these groups or individuals?*
- Q. How might the Church better respond to the face of Jesus in the needy today?*