

# ONEWITH

OneWith community, OneWith faith, OneWith Christ.

March 7, 2021

## Reflection Break Outline Grade 9 ~ Session #11



### Session Goals

#### Scripture Unpacked:

Reading and understanding Sacred Scripture is critical for spiritual growth and enlightenment.

- 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.
- Reflect on our personal Lenten commitments to **Fast, Pray, and Give** aid to the Poor this Lent (*3 separate commitments*).

#### Catholicism Unpacked:

For nearly 2,000 years credos (creeds) have provided a firm theological foundation for the Christian faithful. These defining statements of faith serve as a reference point for personal spiritual reflection and a common bond to strengthen the community of believers.

#### Catechetical (Catholicism) Outcomes:

- *Produce a rough draft of your Discipleship Group's creed that reflects your collective beliefs about God, Jesus, the Trinity and the Church.*

## **Ice Breaker Activity / Questions** (about 5 minutes)

*Hi All,*

*I'm thinking tonight could be busy with the Creed Project so I am not including an Ice Breaker Activity here. If you have a "standard opener" (God Moment, etc.) that is part of your routine go for it! If your group would really miss this warm up time and are looking for ideas, I do have some links posted in "Reference Materials & Links" Section (pg. 4).*

## **Scripture Unpacked** (8-10 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 Temple in Jerusalem was (and 2,000 years later, still is) a powerful symbol of holiness and a symbol of the connection and relationship between God and the Hebrew people. It is often assumed that Jesus' anger was directed at the traders and moneychangers because their business had infringed on and desecrated the temple precinct. But the reality is a bit more complicated.*

- *Tradition dictated that sacrifice made by a priest on the altar was the highest form of worship.*
- *The best animal to sacrifice was a healthy, properly formed creature. But the reality was that this practice was impractical to nearly impossible for most pilgrims.*
- *The most "practical solution" was to purchase an animal for sacrifice at the Temple itself.*
- *The pious Temple traders would not accept Roman coins (they bore the "sacrilegious" image of the Roman Emperor). Therefore, money changers were required to exchange Roman currency for acceptable local coinage – for an added fee, of course...*

*Jesus' outrage is not so much with the traders and the money-changers as with the whole religious practice and hierarchical structure that had developed to a point where the only way to seek God's forgiveness and mercy was to 'buy' it at the Temple. This was what outraged Jesus. He could not stomach the injustice nor the barriers that had been erected between the people and God.*

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## **Digging Deeper - Scripture Questions**

*Choose and discuss one or more of the following questions:*

- *Many find Jesus' display of "anger" or "violence" confusing, disturbing, and/or out of character! What aspects of this gospel passage do you find confronting or challenging?*
- *What was Jesus' dream of the way people should be able to relate to God?*
- *What are the barriers that we place between our selves and true worship of God?*

**Digging Deeper:** *Are there Church practices today that you see as unjust or discriminatory?*

**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.*

### **"Discipleship Challenge"**

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

## Catholicism Unpacked (18-20 minutes)

### *"I Believe..."*

*For nearly 2,000 years credos (creeds) have provided a firm foundation for the Christian faithful. These defining statements of faith serve as a reference point for personal spiritual reflection as easily as they provide a common bond to strengthen the community of believers.*

*~ Barry*

## 9<sup>th</sup> Grade Creed Project

### Putting it together...

It may seem a little daunting, but it is time to start finalizing your group's creed. And while this is a statement of faith that the youth 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 "structural" 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 11<sup>th</sup>** session.
- At our **April 25<sup>th</sup>** 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 9<sup>th</sup> 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.

# OneWith Resources & Links

## Ice Breaker 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/>

## 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/>

## 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 – 3<sup>rd</sup> Day & Brandon Heath*) - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=i3i-VWxOAc>

## Links for total nerds

- 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 – Session #11

In Jewish tradition, the Temple marked the point of physical connection between God and humankind and between the past and the present. It was where God’s story and humanity’s story met. However, in the year 70 C.E.—some 40 years after Jesus—the Temple was destroyed by the Romans. The gospel of John is written another 20+ years later and so the reality of the Temple’s destruction is still trying to be absorbed by the people. It was a very powerful image for the gospel writer to suggest that Jesus was the new Temple—the new point of connection.

The Temple in Jerusalem was (and still is) a powerful symbol of holiness and a symbol of the connection and relationship between God and the Hebrew people. It is often assumed that Jesus’ anger was directed at the traders and moneychangers because their business had infringed on and desecrated the temple precinct. But the reality is a bit more complicated. The Temple was the holiest site for sacrifice to God. The tradition dictated that sacrifice made by a priest on the altar was the highest form of worship. The best animal to sacrifice was a healthy, properly formed creature. Rather than walking a lamb all the way from somewhere like Galilee to Jerusalem, the faithful would purchase their sacrifice animal at the Temple itself—thus the presence of the people selling cattle, sheep, and doves.

To further complicate matters, the Temple traders would not accept Roman coins to purchase the sacrificial animals as they bore the image of the deified emperor. Therefore, money changers were required to exchange Roman currency for acceptable coinage—so the money changers were also playing their part in the prayer life of the Temple. Jesus’ outrage is not so much with the traders and the money-changers as with the whole religious practice and hierarchical structure that has developed to a point where the only way a person can pray in a ‘valid’ way is to purchase an animal and hand it over to a priest who goes behind a screened wall to sacrifice the animal. The only way to seek God’s forgiveness and mercy was to ‘buy’ it at the Temple. This was what outraged Jesus. He could not stomach the injustice nor the barriers that had been erected between the people and their God.

### Questions for Youth

- What aspects of this gospel passage do you find confronting or challenging?
- What was Jesus’ dream of the way people should be able to relate to God?
- Have you ever seen something that you knew to be unjust? What did you do?
- How can you work against injustice in your local community?

### Questions for Parents/Sponsors

- What aspects of this gospel passage do you find confronting or challenging?
- What was Jesus’ dream of the way people should be able to relate to God?
- What is so important about this story that it is included in all 4 Gospels?
- What does Jesus’ extreme actions in the temple tell us about the importance of worship? Responding to injustice?

**Digging Deeper:** Are there Church practices today that may be seen as unjust or an impediment to worship?

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