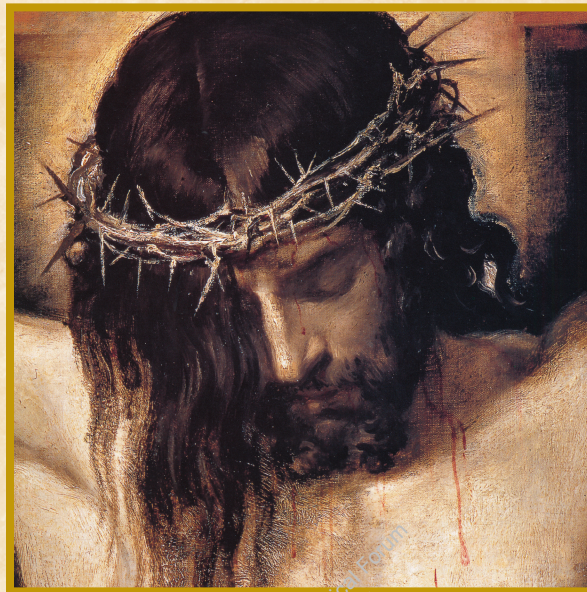

PRESENTER'S GUIDE

The Mystery of Redemption and Christian Discipleship



Publisher: Rev. James Socias



MIDWEST THEOLOGICAL FORUM
Downers Grove, Illinois

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Madonna and Child by Romano.

THE MYSTERY OF REDEMPTION AND CHRISTIAN DISCIPLESHIP

PRESENTER'S GUIDE

How to Use This Presenter's Guide

Guidelines

Read these guidelines before you start to plan what you will do in each session:

Congratulations! You have been entrusted to help others grow in their love of God by growing in their knowledge of the Catholic Faith. Whether the participants in your sessions will be high-school students attending religious education classes, adults who want to learn more, or inquiring non-Catholics who want to learn about the Faith, we have made this *Presenter's Guide* to help every participant better comprehend the material in the book.

We have also designed the *Presenter's Guide* to aid you in your presentation, covering one chapter per session. We encourage you to tailor the activities and questions to your participants, taking into account their knowledge level, what they hope to get out of these sessions, and the amount of time you have to meet. For example, you might choose to forego the Opening Activity altogether if your participants have not yet read the material, or you might choose to omit some of the Focus Questions if you are pressed for time.

As the presenter, your tendency might be to schedule more activities and questions than can be completed in the amount of time that a session lasts. **Start out with less**, and have a few questions or activities in mind if there is time at the end of a session. You should have no problem, for example, introducing a discussion topic from an earlier section after having presented the whole chapter.

There is at least one exercise in each chapter, be it a Guided Exercise or Closing Activity, that is focused on helping each participant make a personal connection to the material. It is recommended that you identify this one and make time to cover that activity with the participants during the session.

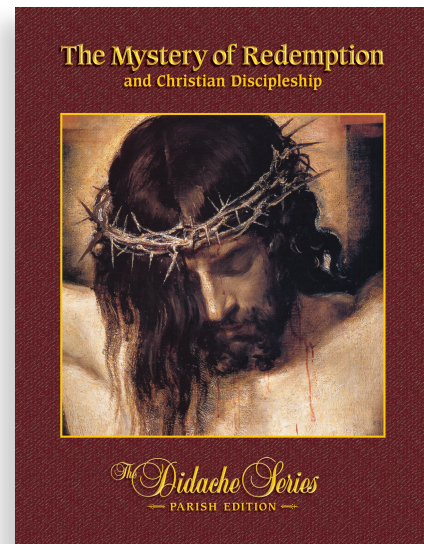
It is a good idea to open and close each session with a prayer. You might choose to use the same prayer to open and close each session, especially a popular

prayer such as the *Lord's Prayer*, the *Hail Mary*, or the *Glory Be*. If you prefer, each session has a suggested Opening Prayer that is related to the chapter.

BEFORE THE FIRST SESSION

Overview of Chapter 1

Be sure you and each of the participants have a copy of this book:



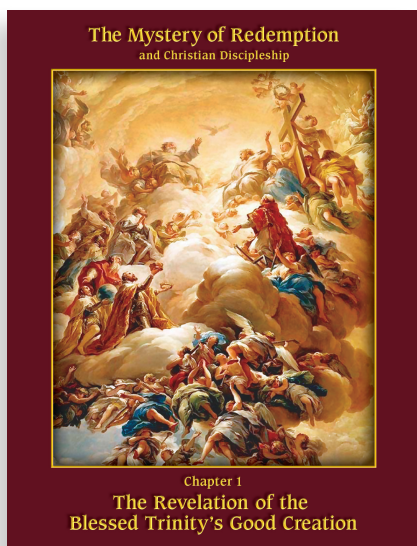
The Mystery of Redemption and Christian Discipleship,
Parish Edition

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Available from MTF at www.theologicalforum.org

At the time of registration, give each participant a summary of Chapter 1 and have him or her read Chapter 1 before the first session.

You might want your registrar to reproduce and distribute page 64 in this guide to the participants.



Chapter 1: THE REVELATION OF THE BLESSED TRINITY'S GOOD CREATION

Key Ideas

These are reprinted from the textbook for your reference:

- The Church understands the Bible to be inspired and inerrant ancient sacred literature that contains religious truths revealed by God, which should be interpreted in literal and spiritual senses.
- God created the world for mankind, who is to use and care for creation, offering it back to God with love and thanksgiving.
- Creation is the work of each Person of the Blessed Trinity.

Vocabulary List

These are reprinted from the textbook for your reference:

- **Redemption**—Literally meaning “being bought back,” the act by which Jesus Christ, through his sacrificial Death on the Cross, set us free from the slavery of sin, thus redeeming or “buying us back” from the power of Satan. (p. 3)
- **Bible**—Sacred Scripture; the books that contain the truth of God’s Revelation, which were composed by human authors under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. The Bible contains forty-six books in the Old Testament and twenty-seven in the New. (p. 4)

- **Inerrant**—Making no mistakes or errors. Scripture is inerrant; it always teaches truth, never falsehood. (p. 4)
- **Infallible**—Incapable of error. The Bible and the Church are infallible because of a special protection by the Holy Spirit. (p. 4)
- **Inspired**—Guided by God; from a word meaning “breathed in.” The human writers of Scripture wrote in their own words, but through God’s inspiration wrote what he intended them to write and nothing more. (p. 4)
- **Salvation history**—The story of God’s plan to save man from the consequences of sin. This plan began with creation, is unfolding now, and will continue until the end of time. (p. 4)
- **Senses of Scripture**—There are two basic senses in which Sacred Scripture should be read, the literal and the spiritual. The spiritual has three senses: the allegorical or typical, the moral or tropological, and the anagogical. (p. 6)
- **Creation**—God’s bringing forth the universe and all its inhabitants into being out of nothing. Creation is good but has been corrupted by sin. (p. 7)
- **Evolution**—The scientific theory that species came to be as they are by a gradual process of change and development. Valid theories on the origin of life cannot contradict two facts: God created all matter, and the creation of human beings is a special act of the divine Creator. (p. 7)
- **Image (and likeness)**—A representation such as a statue or picture. Each human person is made in the image of God, that is, human beings are like God insofar as having intelligence, free will, and the capacity to love. (p. 8)

AT THE BEGINNING OF THE SESSION

Opening Prayer

Begin the session with an opening prayer such as the following or incorporate the Scripture passage that is referenced in the Opening Activity (Ps 8:1, 3-9; see below):

*O God, the Creator of all things,
by water and the Holy Spirit
you have given the universe its beauty
and fashioned us in your own image.*

*O Christ the Lord, from your pierced side
you gave us your sacraments
as fountains of salvation.*

*O Holy Spirit, giver of life,
from the baptismal font of the Church
you have formed us into a new creation
in the waters of rebirth.*

Bless and purify your Church. Amen.

(From the *Blessing of Holy Water Outside Mass*,
Prayer of Blessing)

Overview of the Chapter

*If you did not have the registrar distribute
the summary to the participants, read the
summary (p. 64 in this guide) to them.*

Opening Activity

*Have the participants complete
the Opening Activity (p. 2).*

Key Ideas

Have a participant read aloud the Key Ideas (p. 3).

INTRODUCTION

(pp. 2-3)

Vocabulary

*Have a participant read aloud the definition
of the vocabulary word on page 3.*

Review

*Allow some time for the participants
to read or review this section.*

Focus Questions

*Ask the participants to reply to
these Focus Questions:*

1. **What does “the Redemption” mean?** It means how God “bought back” or saved fallen humanity from our bondage to sin and death.
2. **Why is the Redemption a mystery?** It includes truths that exceed the ability of human reason to fully comprehend.
3. **Why do human beings need to be redeemed?** Because of Original Sin, we are separated from God and need to be saved from sin and death.

Additional Activities

*If there is time, have the participants
complete the Guided Exercise (p. 3).*

HOW THE CHURCH UNDERSTANDS THE BIBLE

(pp. 3-5)

Vocabulary

*Have a participant read aloud the definitions
of the vocabulary words on page 4.*

Review

*Allow some time for the participants
to read or review this section.*

Focus Questions

*Ask the participants to reply to
these Focus Questions:*

4. **What is “salvation history”?** It is the story of how God’s plan of salvation has unfolded from the time of the Creation to the coming of Jesus Christ and the beginnings of his Church.
5. **What does it mean to say that the Bible is inspired?** It means that the Holy Spirit enlightened the authors to write what God wanted.
6. **Why must the Bible be inerrant or without errors?** God is the principal author of Sacred Scripture, and he can neither deceive nor be deceived.
7. **To what extent were the writers of the books of the Bible true authors?** The writers used their intelligence, memory, imagination, and writing skills, so they were true authors.
8. **Why is the Bible sacred?** It is sacred because God is its divine author.
9. **Why is the Bible literature?** Its human authors used literary forms and techniques to convey God’s truth.
10. **What are some of the literary techniques employed by the authors of Sacred Scripture?** These literary techniques include stories, histories, poems, dialogues, and figurative language.
11. **How ancient is the Bible’s literature?** The newest books of the Bible are almost 2000 years old.

12. According to the *Catechism*, what mysteries do the first three chapters of Genesis present in just a few words? These chapters present the mysteries of Creation, the Fall, and God's promise of salvation.

13. What does it mean to read the Bible in the light of Christ? It means the events of Christ's life provide a key to understanding Old Testament events.

14. What does it mean to read the Bible within the unity of Sacred Scripture? It means that the many books of the Bible are really only one book with Christ as its main theme.

15. What does it mean to read the Bible in the living Tradition of the Church? This means that in interpreting the various books of the Bible, we do so in light of the entire Deposit of Faith, which Christ entrusted to his Church.

Additional Activities

If there is time, have the participants complete the Guided Exercise (p. 5).

THE LITERAL AND SPIRITUAL SENSES OF THE BIBLE

(pp. 5-7)

Vocabulary

Have a participant read aloud the definition of the vocabulary word on page 6.

Review

Allow some time for the participants to read or review this section.

Focus Questions

Ask the participants to reply to these Focus Questions:

16. What is the literal sense of a passage of the Bible? The literal sense is the plain meaning that the author intended to express.

17. What are some of the genres in which the Bible was written that affect the way we interpret it? Some of the genres are history, law, wisdom, poetry, prophecy, apocalypse, letter, epic, fable, and allegory.

18. What is a literalistic interpretation? It is reading something literally which can lead to false interpretations.

19. What is a literalistic reading of the six days of creation in Genesis? It is that God created the world in six, twenty-four-hour days.

20. What is the problem with a literalistic reading of the six days of creation in Genesis? The author may have intended something else since a literalistic reading seems to contradict natural science.

21. What is the literal meaning of the Gospel accounts of Christ's Resurrection? The Church interprets these accounts literally: Christ really did rise from the dead.

22. What is the spiritual sense of Scripture? This sense refers to other meanings that can be discovered in the texts when read under the influence of the Holy Spirit in light of the mystery of Christ.

23. What is the allegorical or typical sense of Scripture? It is the way people and events in salvation history parallel future people or events.

24. What is an example of a "typical" sense of Scripture? Isaac is a type or symbol of Christ.

25. What is the moral or tropological sense of Scripture? It is how a person in the Bible can be a model for moral living.

26. What is an example of the tropological sense of Scripture? Job is a model of patience in suffering and of trust in God.

27. What is the anagogical sense of Scripture? It is how a passage in Scriptures prefigures eternal life.

28. What is an example of the anagogical sense of Scripture? The Old Testament prophets' vision of the New Jerusalem can be seen as an image of Heaven.

THE CREATION OF THE WORLD FOR MANKIND

(pp. 7-9)

Vocabulary

Have a participant read aloud the definitions of the vocabulary words on pages 7-8.

Review

Allow some time for the participants to read or review this section.

Focus Questions

Ask the participants to reply to these Focus Questions:

- 29.** If the Creation account in Genesis is not meant to transmit scientific truth, what kind of truth does it contain? It contains religious and metaphysical truths.
- 30.** What is religious truth? It is a truth about the relationship between God and human beings.
- 31.** What is a metaphysical truth? It is a philosophical truth that can be known through reason, which concerns the nature and most basic cause of something.
- 32.** What is the truth in the first verse of Genesis that is both religious and metaphysical? The truth is that God is the First Cause and Creator of the universe.
- 33.** What is the meaning of the six-day Creation account? God created the world according to a divine plan.
- 34.** What is unique about human beings in Genesis? They are the only creatures that God has made in his own image and likeness.
- 35.** According to Genesis, what authority did God give human beings over creation? We are called to “subdue” it through work as good stewards.
- 36.** What relationship does humanity have to God’s creation? We are called to be stewards or caretakers of God’s creation and thus participate in his creation.
- 37.** What is the meaning of work in Genesis? Work was the reason why Adam and Eve were called to subdue and complete what God had already created for them.
- 38.** To what extent has the human race obeyed God’s command to subdue the earth? Throughout history people have obeyed God’s command through work, which gives glory to him.

Additional Activities

If there is time, have the participants complete the Guided Exercise (p. 8).

NOTES

CREATION AS THE WORK OF THE BLESSED TRINITY

(p. 9)

Review

Allow some time for the participants to read or review this section.

Focus Questions

Ask the participants to reply to these Focus Questions:

- 39.** How does the truth that God created the universe relate to the doctrine of the Blessed Trinity? Creation was an act of each Person of the Blessed Trinity—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.
- 40.** How is God the Son “present” in the Creation account in Genesis? Christ, the Word of God, is present in the creation through God’s verbal commands.
- 41.** In the prologue to his Gospel, what connection does St. John make between creation through the Word and redemption through the Word? In the prologue to his Gospel, St. John says that the Word who created everything has now become the incarnate Redeemer.
- 42.** How is the Holy Spirit alluded to in the Creation account in Genesis? The Holy Spirit is intimated in the mentions of spirit and breath.
- 43.** How is the Blessed Trinity as a whole alluded to in the Creation account in Genesis? God uses the plural to refer to himself: “Let us make man in our image.”

CREATION, COSMOLOGY, AND EVOLUTION; CONCLUSION

(pp. 10-12)

Review

Allow some time for the participants to read or review this section.

Focus Questions

Ask the participants to reply to these Focus Questions:

- 44.** Are scientific theories like the “big bang” and evolution incompatible with the creation account in Genesis? There is no necessary contradiction,

properly understood, between scientific theories of Creation and the Creation account in Genesis. The creation account in Genesis does not attempt to provide a scientific or chronological explanation for the process God used in creation.

45. What was remarkable about evangelization in England around the time of St. Bede? In less than a century, England went from needing to be evangelized to evangelizing Europe.

46. What do we owe St. Bede in terms of historical chronology? Bede first used the BC/AD scheme to date historical events.

CLOSING ACTIVITIES

Closing Activities

Have the participants complete the Closure or Alternative Assessment (p. 12).

Ask the participants to answer the Discussion Questions (p. 12; answers below). These can be given as a quiz or used to lead a class discussion.

Discussion Questions (p. 12)

- 1. What is “salvation history”?** It is the story of how God's plan of salvation has unfolded from the time of the Creation to the coming of Jesus Christ and the beginnings of his Church.
- 2. How does the Church understand the Bible?** The Church understands Sacred Scripture to be ancient sacred literature, inspired by the Holy Spirit and written down by true human authors, which should be interpreted in literal and spiritual senses, under the guidance of the Church's teaching authority.
- 3. What does it mean to say that the Bible is inspired and inerrant?** It means that the Holy Spirit enlightened the Sacred Authors to write what God wanted and that it cannot contain errors because God is its primary author.
- 4. What does it mean to read the Bible in the light of Christ, within the unity of Sacred Scripture, and in the living Tradition of the Church?** It means the events of Christ's life provide a key to understanding Old Testament events. The many books of the Bible are really only one book with Christ as its main theme. In interpreting the various books of the Bible, we do so in light of the entire Deposit of Faith, which Christ entrusted to his Church.

5. What is the literal sense of a passage of the Bible? The literal sense is the plain meaning that the author intended to express.

6. What is the spiritual sense of Scripture? The spiritual sense refers to other meanings that can be discovered in the sacred texts when read under the influence of the Holy Spirit in light of the mystery of Christ.

7. What is the truth in the first verse of Genesis that is both religious and metaphysical? God is the First Cause and Creator of the universe.

8. What is unique about human beings in Genesis? They are the only creatures that God has made in his own image and likeness.

9. According to Genesis, what authority does God give human beings over creation? We are called to “subdue” it through work as good stewards.

10. What is the role of human beings in creation? People are stewards or caretakers of creation.

11. How does the truth that God created the universe relate to the doctrine of the Blessed Trinity? Creation was an act of each Person of the Blessed Trinity—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

12. How is God the Son “present” in the Genesis Creation account? Christ, the Word of God, is present in the creation through God's verbal commands.

13. How is the Holy Spirit alluded to in the Creation account in Genesis? The Holy Spirit is intimated in the mentions of spirit and breath.

14. How is the Blessed Trinity as a whole alluded to in the Creation account in Genesis? God uses the plural to refer to himself: “Let us make man in our image.”

15. Are scientific theories like the “big bang” and evolution incompatible with the Creation account in Genesis? There is no necessary contradiction, properly understood, between scientific theories of Creation and the Creation account in Genesis. The creation account in Genesis does not attempt to provide a scientific or chronological explanation for the process God used in creation.

NOTES

Overview of the Next Chapter

Read this summary to the participants:

Chapter 2 focuses on the pinnacle of creation: human beings. This chapter explores our creation in God's image and likeness and our composition of body and soul. The chapter shows that our first parents were created in a state of holiness and justice as well as in a state of marriage. The chapter closes with the creation of the angels, some of whom assist us.

Key Ideas of the Next Chapter

Have a participant read aloud the Key Ideas (p. 14). These are reprinted from the textbook for your reference:

- Human beings are made in the image and likeness of God because God has endowed them with immortal, rational souls that can reason, act freely, and love.
- God created human beings as either male or female; their sexual complementarity is ordained for marriage, procreation, and child rearing.
- Human beings are called to self-giving love and to use their sexuality in the service of faithful and fruitful married love.
- Human beings were created in a state of original holiness and justice, immune from suffering, with a vocation to work.
- Angels are purely spiritual beings who serve God, some by guarding us.

AT THE END OF THE SESSION

Read the Next Chapter

Have the participants read Chapter 2 before the next session.

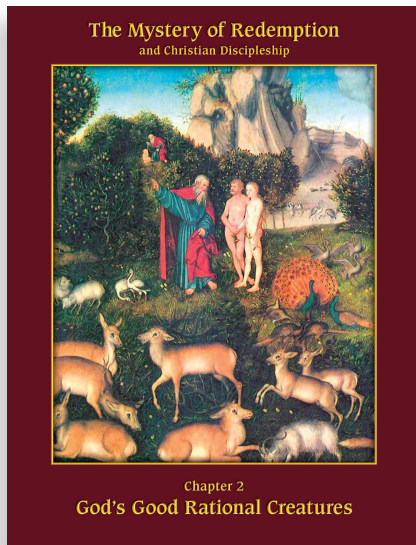
Closing Prayer

End the session with a closing prayer.

Examples include the *Lord's Prayer*, the *Hail Mary*, or the *Glory Be*.

NOTES

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Chapter 2: GOD'S GOOD RATIONAL CREATURES

Vocabulary List

These are reprinted from the textbook for your reference:

- **Soul**—The form of the body, this is an individual spiritual substance created directly by God in his image and likeness. The unity of a body and soul form a human person. The soul is immortal—it does not perish when separated from the body at death—and it will be united with a glorified body at the final resurrection. (p.16)
- **Free will**—This gift from God includes the power of directing one's own actions without constraint. This makes possible the choice to love God. (p.16)
- **Adam**—The first man and our first father. Together with Eve, he committed the first sin (Original Sin). This Hebrew name refers to the particular individual or to mankind in general. (p.21)
- **Eve**—The first woman and our first mother. Eve was created from the rib of Adam, and thus woman, unlike the animals, is man's equal and complement. With Adam, she committed the first sin (Original Sin). (p.21)
- **Original holiness**—The state of harmony that existed between our first parents and God by which they fully participated in divine life before the Fall. (p.21)

- **Original justice**—The state enjoyed by our first parents characterized by inner harmony of the human person, harmony between man and woman, and harmony with creation. (p.21)
- **Angel**—From the Greek *angelos*, a translation of the Hebrew *malak*, meaning “messenger.” A spiritual, personal, and immortal creature, possessing intelligence and free will, who glorifies God without ceasing and serves God as protector of and messenger to man. (p.22)
- **Guardian angel**—An angel personally assigned to protect and intercede for every human being. (p.22)

AT THE BEGINNING OF THE SESSION

Opening Prayer

Begin the session with an opening prayer such as the following:

*Remove from me all that can displease you
or resist your holy will;
let your pure love imprint your image so deeply
upon my heart
that I shall never be able to forget you or
to be separated from you. Amen.*

(From St. Margaret Mary Alacoque, *Act of Consecration to the Sacred Heart of Jesus*)

Opening Activity

Have the participants complete the Opening Activity (p.14).

INTRODUCTION; IMAGE AND LIKENESS

(pp.14-16)

Vocabulary

Have a participant read aloud the definitions of the vocabulary words on page 16.

Review

Allow some time for the participants to read or review this section.