

## A Reading from the Acts of the Apostles

### Acts 2: 36 - 47

"...Therefore, let the whole house of Israel know for certain that God has made him both Lord and Messiah, this Jesus whom you crucified." Now when they heard this, they were cut to the heart, and they asked Peter and the other apostles, "What are we to do, my brothers?"

Peter (said) to them, "Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins; and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. For the promise is made to you and to your children and to all those far off, whomever the Lord our God will call."

He testified with many other arguments, and was exhorting them, "Save yourselves from this corrupt generation." Those who accepted his message were baptized, and about three thousand persons were added that day.

#### COMMUNAL LIFE

They devoted themselves to the teaching of the apostles and to the communal life, to the breaking of the bread and to the prayers. Awe came upon everyone, and many wonders and signs were done through the apostles. All who believed were together and had all things in common; they would sell their property and possessions and divide them among all according to each one's need.

Every day they devoted themselves to meeting together in the temple area and to breaking bread in their homes. They ate their meals with exultation and sincerity of heart, praising God and enjoying favor with all the people. And every day the Lord added to their number those who were being saved."

#### The Word of the Lord

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#### Main Points of the Reading

1. Verse 36 - ... the whole house ...
2. Verse 37 - ... cut to the heart ...
3. Verse 38 - Repent and be baptized, ...
4. Verse 39 - ... promise is made to you and your children ...
5. Verse 40 - Save yourselves from this corrupt generation.

#### Communal Living

6. Verse 41 - ... accepted his message and were baptized, ...
7. Verse 42 - ... devoted themselves to ...
8. Verse 43 - Awe came ... many wonders and signs ...
9. Verse 44 - All who believed were together and had things in common; ...
10. Verse 45 - ... according to each other's needs ...
11. Verse 46 - Everyday ...meeting in the temple ...breaking bread ... with sincerity of heart
12. Verse 47 - ... praising God ...And every day the Lord added to their number...

## OUTLINE FOR TONIGHT

MAIN THEME: Christ Our Hope

- I. Brief Review of Sobering Perceptions
- II. Acts of the Apostles – The Beginning Of Our Prescriptions
- III. Overview on Prescriptions – God Never Leaves Us Hanging!
- IV. The Prescriptions to Guide Us Toward Our Salvation
  - Prescription – Communal Living
  - Prescription – Prayer
  - Prescription – Sacraments
  - Prescription – Reading Sacred Scripture
  - Prescription – Repentance
  - Prescription – Metanoia
- V. Closing and Questions
- VI. Feedback from Other Groups and Evaluation Forms

## CHRIST OUR HOPE

Catechism of the Catholic Church (CCC) Glossary – Hope is the Theological virtue by which we desire and expect from God both eternal life and the grace we need to attain it. (CCC1817).

CCC 1817- Hope is the Theological virtue by which we desire the Kingdom of heaven and eternal life as our happiness, placing our trust in Christ's promises and relying not on our own strength, but on the help of the grace of the Holy Spirit. "Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for he who promised is faithful." (Heb 10:23). "The Holy Spirit ... He poured out upon us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior, so that we might be justified by his grace and become heirs in hope of eternal life." (Titus 3:6-7).

Total CCC references: 1817 - 1821

## Definitions/PRESCRIPTIONS on PRAYER

**Prayer** – the elevation of the mind and heart to God in praise of His glory; a petition made to God for some desired good, or in thanksgiving for a good received, or in intercession for others before God. Through prayer, the Christian experiences a communion with God through Christ in the church. (Catechism of the Catholic Church [CCC] Glossary of Terms)

### **SCRIPTURE READINGS**

#### **The Lord's Prayer according to the Gospel of Luke:**

**Chapter** 11:1 He was praying in a certain place, and when he had finished, one of his disciples said to him, "Lord, teach us to pray just as John taught his disciples." (11:2) He said to them, "When you pray, say: Father, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come.  
(11:3) Give us each day our daily bread  
(11:4) and forgive us our sins for we ourselves forgive everyone in debt to us, and do not subject us to the final test."

#### **Further Prescriptions on Prayer from Apostle Luke**

**Chapter** 11:5 And he said to them, "Suppose one of you has a friend to whom he goes at midnight and says, 'Friend, lend me three loaves of bread, (11:6) for a friend of mine has arrived at my house from a journey and I have nothing to offer him,'  
(11:7) and he says in reply from within, 'Do not bother me; the door has already been locked and my children and I are already in bed. I cannot get up to give you anything.'  
(11:8) I tell you, if he does not get up to give him the loaves because of their friendship, he will get up to give him whatever he needs because of his persistence.

#### **Luke's Prescription on the Answer to Prayer**

**Chapter** 11:9 "And I tell you, ask and you will receive; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you. (11:10) For everyone who asks, receives; and the one who seeks, finds; and to the one who knocks, the door will be opened.  
(11:11) What father among you would hand his son a snake when he asks for a fish (11:12) or hand him a scorpion when he asks for an egg?  
(11:13) If you then, who are wicked, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will the Father in heaven give the holy Spirit \* to those who ask him?"

#### **Matthew's Basic Prescription about Prayer**

**Chapter** 6:5 "When you pray, do not be like the hypocrites, who love to stand and pray in the synagogues and on street corners so that others may see them. Amen, I say to you, they have received their reward.  
(6:6) But when you pray, go to your inner room, close the door, and pray to your Father in secret. And your Father who sees in secret will repay you.  
(6:7) In praying, do not babble like the pagans, who think that they will be heard because of their many words. (6:8) Do not be like them. Your Father knows what you need before you ask him.

## **The Lord's Prayer according to the Gospel to Matthew**

**Chapter 6:9** "This is how you are to pray:

- Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name,  
(6:10) your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven.  
(6:11) Give us today our daily bread;  
(6:12) and forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors;  
(6:13) and do not subject us to the final test, but deliver us from the evil one.

(6:14) If you forgive others their transgressions, your heavenly Father will forgive you. (6:15) But if you do not forgive others, neither will your Father forgive your transgressions.

## **Apostle James' Prescription on the POWER of PRAYER**

### **Anointing of the Sick**

**Chapter 5:13** Is anyone among you suffering? He should pray. Is anyone in good spirits? He should sing praise. (5:14) Is anyone among you sick? He should summon the presbyters of the church, and they should pray over him and anoint (him) with oil in the name of the Lord, (5:15) and the prayer of faith will save the sick person, and the Lord will raise him up. If he has committed any sins, he will be forgiven.\*

### **Confession and Intercession**

**Chapter 5:16** Therefore, confess your sins to one another and pray for one another, that you may be healed. The fervent prayer of a righteous person is very powerful. (5:17) Elijah was a human being like us; yet he prayed earnestly that it might not rain, and for three years and six months it did not rain upon the land. (5:18) Then he prayed again, and the sky gave rain and the earth produced its fruit.

## **Scripture Readings on HINDRANCES TO PRAYER**

### **Having an unforgiving spirit (Matthew 6: 14-15)**

If you forgive others their transgressions, your heavenly Father will forgive you. But if you do not forgive others, neither will your Father forgive your transgressions.

### **Empty repetitions in prayer (Matthew 6: 7-8)**

In praying, do not babble like the pagans, who think that they will be heard because of their many words. Do not be like them. Your Father knows what you need before you ask him with the wrong motives.

### **Being Hypocritical (Matthew 6: 5-6)**

"When you pray, do not be like the hypocrites, who love to stand and pray in the synagogues and on street corners so that others may see them. Amen, I say to you, they have received their reward. But when you pray, go to your inner room, close the door, and pray to your Father in secret. And your Father who sees in secret will repay you.

### **Family problems: (1 Peter 3:7)**

Likewise, you husbands should live with your wives in understanding, showing honor to the weaker female sex, since we are joint heirs of the gift of life, so that your prayers may not be hindered.\*

**Catechism of the Catholic Church References:** Para. 2559 thru 2565

## Definitions/PRESCRIPTIONS on the SACRAMENTS

**Sacraments** -- An efficacious sign of grace instituted by Christ and entrusted to the church, by which **divine life** is dispensed to us through the work of the Holy Spirit. The Sacraments, called "mysteries" in the eastern Churches, are seven in number: Baptism, Confirmation, Eucharist, Penance or Reconciliation, Anointing of the Sick, Holy Orders, and Matrimony. The primary characteristics of a Sacrament are:

- Christ instituted the sacraments of the New Law to **confer His Grace**.
- The sacraments touch all the **stages** and all-important moments of **Christian life**.
- They give birth and increase, healing and mission to the Christian's **life of faith**
- Bring a certain resemblance between the stages of **natural life** & the stages of **spiritual life**.

### Scripture Readings for the Sacraments

**Baptism:** John 3:5; Acts 2:37-38 (repent and be Baptized); John 3:22, and Catechism of the Catholic Church [CCC] Para 1265 (a new Creature).

**Confirmation:** Acts 19:5-6 and Acts 8:14-17

**Eucharist:** Matthew 26:26-28; John 6:52-58 and Act 19:18

**Penance:** John 20:22-23 and James 5:16

**Anointing of the Sick:** James 5:14-15 and Mark 6:6-13

**Holy Orders:** Bishop – Greek for "supervisor" 1 Timothy 3  
Priest – Greek for "elder" John 14 (last supper discourse) and John 20: 21  
Deacon – Greek for "helper" Acts 6:1-7 and CCC Para.1597

**Matrimony:** Genesis 1:27, 2:24, Matthew 19:1 (what God has joined) and Ephesians 5:21-32 (Great mystery)

**Catechism of the Catholic Church (CCC) References for Sacraments:** Para.1210 through 1666

## Definitions/PRESCRIPTIONS on Reading SACRED SCRIPTURE

**CHRIST** – The unique Word of Sacred Scripture: In order to reveal Himself to humanity, in the condescension of His goodness, God speaks to them in human words. “Indeed the words of God, expressed in the words of men, are in every way like human language, just as the Word of the eternal Father, when He took on himself the flesh of human weakness, became like man.” (Catechism of the Catholic Church [CCC] Para. 109).

All Sacred Scripture is but one book and this one book is Christ, “because all divine Scripture speaks of Christ, and all divine Scripture is fulfilled in Christ” (Hugh of St. Victor De arca Noe 2, 8:PL 176,642: Cf. Ibid, 2,9:PL 176,6432643), (CCC Para. 134).

**The Canon** – the list of inspired books, Greek for “Measuring rod”, proper for reading in the liturgy. The whole Church, meeting in General Council (Trent), decided on the canon. It was by the Apostolic Tradition that the Church discerned which writings are to be included in the Canon (CCC Para. 124).

### **The Old Testament (46 Books)**

In the Old Testament, the Church accepts some books as canonical that Jewish tradition does not regard as scripture. These books are called “deuterocanonical,” from the Greek word meaning “second canon.” They are Tobit, Judith, Wisdom, Sirach (ecclesiasticus), Baruch, 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Maccabees, parts of Daniel and parts of Esther.

Genesis	1 Chronicles	Wisdom	Jonah
Exodus	2 Chronicles	Sirach	Micah
Leviticus	Ezra	Isaiah	Nahum
Numbers	Nehemiah	Jeremiah	Habakkuk
Deuteronomy	Tobit	Lamentation	Zephaniah
Joshua	Judith	Baruch	Haggai
Judges	Esther	Ezekiel	Zechariah
Ruth	Job	Daniel	Malachi
1 Samuel	Psalms	Hosea	1 Maccabees
2 Samuel	Proverbs	Joel	2 Maccabees
1 Kings	Ecclesiastes	Amos	
2 Kings	Song of Solomon	Obadiah	

### **The New Testament (27 Books)**

Matthew	Ephesians	Hebrews
Mark	Philippians	James
Luke	Colossians	1 Peter
John	1 Thessalonians	2 Peter
Acts of the Apostles	2 Thessalonians	1 John
Romans	1 Timothy	2 John
1 Corinthians	2 Timothy	3 John
2 Corinthians	Titus	Jude
Galatians	Philemon	Revelation

## PRESCRIPTIONS ON READING SACRED SCRIPTURE

## Luke 24:25-27, 44-46

... "And he said to them, "Oh, how foolish you are! How slow of heart to believe all that the prophets spoke! Was it not necessary that the Messiah should suffer \* these things and enter into his glory?" Then beginning with Moses and all the prophets, he interpreted to them what referred to him in all the scriptures. He said to them, "These are my words that I spoke to you while I was still with you, that everything written about me in the law of Moses and in the prophets and psalms must be fulfilled." Then he opened their minds to understand the scriptures."

... "And he said to them, "Thus it is written that the Messiah would suffer and rise from the dead on the third day and that repentance, for the forgiveness of sins, would be preached in his name to all the nations, beginning from Jerusalem."

## 2 Timothy 3:1-16

[http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible\\_hold/2timothy/2timothy3.htm - 1#1](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible_hold/2timothy/2timothy3.htm - 1#1) But understand this; there will be terrifying times in the last days. People will be self-centered and lovers of money, proud, haughty, abusive, disobedient to their parents, ungrateful, irreligious, callous, implacable, slanderous, licentious, brutal, hating what is good, traitors, reckless, conceited, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God, as they make a pretense of religion but deny its power. Reject them. For some of these slip into homes and make captives of women weighed down by sins, led by various desires, **always trying to learn but never able to reach a knowledge of the truth**. Just as Jannes and Jambres opposed Moses, so they also oppose the truth--people of depraved mind, unqualified in the faith.

But they will not make further progress, for their foolishness will be plain to all, as it was with those two. <sup>2</sup> You have followed my teaching, way of life, purpose, faith, patience, love, endurance, persecutions, and sufferings, such as happened to me in Antioch, Iconium, and Lystra, persecutions that I endured. Yet from all these things, the Lord delivered me.

In fact, all who want to live religiously in Christ Jesus will be persecuted. But wicked people and charlatans will go from bad to worse, deceivers and deceived. But you, remain faithful to what you have learned and believed, because you know from whom you learned it, and that from infancy you have known (the) sacred scriptures, which are capable of giving you wisdom for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus.

<sup>3 4</sup> All scripture is inspired by God and is useful for teaching, for refutation, for correction, and for training in righteousness, so that one who belongs to God may be competent, equipped for every good work.

**Catechism of the Catholic Church (CCC) Para.113** "Read the Scripture within 'the living Tradition of the whole Church.' According to a saying of the Fathers, Sacred Scripture is written principally in the Church's heart rather than in documents and records, for the Church carries in her Tradition the living memorial of God's word, and it is the Holy Spirit who gives her the spiritual interpretation of the Scripture ("according to the spiritual meaning which the Spirit grants to the Church")."

## Definitions PRESCRIPTIONS on Repentance

**Repentance/Contrition** – Sorrow of the soul and hatred for the sin committed, together with a resolution no to sin again. Contrition is the most important act of the penitent, and is necessary for the reception of the Sacrament of penance.

“**Penance requires**... the sinner to endure all things willingly, be contrite of heart, confess with the lips, and practice complete humility and fruitful satisfaction.”

Roman Catechism II, V,21;cf. Council of Trent (1551):DS 1673.

This Sacrament has also been called the

- sacrament of conversion
- sacrament of Penance
- sacrament of confession
- sacrament of forgiveness, or
- sacrament of Reconciliation

**Penance:** *Interior* penance is a conversion of heart toward God and away from sin, which implies the intention to change one's life because of hope in God's divine mercy (CCC para. 1431). *External* acts of penance include fasting, prayer, and almsgiving (CCC para, 1434). The observance of certain penitential practices is obliged by the fourth precept of the Church (CCC para. 2043)

**Penance, Sacrament Of:** The liturgical celebration of God's forgiveness of the sins of the penitent, who is thus reconciled with God and with the Church. The acts of the penitent--contrition, the confession of sins, and satisfaction or reparation--together with the prayer of absolution by the priest, constitute the essential elements of the Sacrament of Penance (CCC para. 980, 1422, 1440, 1448).

**Penitent/Penitential:** The sinner who repents of sin and seeks forgiveness (CCC para. 1451). In the early Church, public sinners belonged to an "order of penitents," who did public penance for their sins, often for years (CCC para. 1447). Penitential acts or practices refer to those which dispose one for or flows from interior penance or conversion; such acts lead to and follow upon the celebration of the Sacrament of Penance (CCC para. 1434). See Satisfaction (for sin).

**Contrition:** Sorrow of the soul and hatred for the sin committed, together with a resolution not to sin again. Contrition is the most important act of the penitent, and is necessary for the reception of the Sacrament of Penance (CCC para 1451).

**Confession:** An essential element of the Sacrament of Penance and Reconciliation, which consists in telling one's sins to the priestly minister. By extension, the word confession is used to refer to the Sacrament of Penance itself (CCC para. 1455).

## SCRIPTURE READINGS

### Mark Prescription on Penance

**Chapter 2:1-12** When Jesus returned to Capernaum after some days, it became known that he was at home. Many gathered together so that there was no longer room for them, not even around the door, and he preached the word to them. They came bringing to him a paralytic carried by four men. Unable to get near Jesus because of the crowd, they opened up the roof above him. After they had broken through, they let down the mat on which the paralytic was lying.

When Jesus saw their faith, he said to the paralytic, "Child, your sins are forgiven."  
Now some of the scribes were sitting there asking themselves, "Why does this man speak that way? He is blaspheming. Who but God alone can forgive sins?"

Jesus immediately knew in his mind what they were thinking to themselves, so he said, "Why are you thinking such things in your hearts? Which is easier, to say to the paralytic, 'Your sins are forgiven,' or to say, 'Rise, pick up your mat and walk'?"

But that you may know that the Son of Man has authority to forgive sins on earth"--  
he said to the paralytic, "I say to you, rise, pick up your mat, and go home." He rose, picked up his mat at once, and went away in the sight of everyone. They were all astounded and glorified God, saying, "We have never seen anything like this."

## **James' Prescription on Repentance**

### **James 5:16-20**

**Chapter 5:16-20** Therefore, confess your sins to one another and pray for one another, that you may be healed. The fervent prayer of a righteous person is very powerful. Elijah was a human being like us; yet he prayed earnestly that it might not rain, and for three years and six months, it did not rain upon the land. Then he prayed again, and the sky gave rain and the earth produced its fruit.

[Conversion of sinners]

My brothers, if anyone among you should stray from the truth and someone bring him back, he should know that whoever brings back a sinner from the error of his way will save his soul from death and will cover a multitude of sins.

## Definitions/Reflections on the Word METENOIA (NEW MIND)

**Metanoia – Reflections:** John the Baptist proclaims a baptism of repentance. The Greek word for repentance is **metanoia**, which refers to a change of “heart” or a change of mind.

<http://www.usccb.org/cchd/Advent2006.pdf-3383.bkb> – U.S. Bishops’ web Site – “metanoia”; 1

... in order to proclaim the Gospel. The core of the process of evangelization is conversion, **metanoia**, and conversion means change. In the words of John Cardinal Newman: “To live is to change, and to be perfect is to have changed often.” ...

<http://www.usccb.org/evangelization/Gonzalez.doc-49.okb> - U.S. Bishops’ web Site – “metanoia”:1

U.S. Catholic Bishops - Office for the Catechism -- ... Jesus impels us to conversion. In speaking of conversion, the New Testament uses the word **metanoia**, which means a change of mentality. It is not simply a matter of thinking...

<http://www.usccb.org/catechism/update/wint99.htm> - U.S. Bishops' Web Site - metanoia: 1

### SCRIPTURE READINGS

**Mark 2:21** “No one sews a piece of unshrunk cloth on an old cloak. If he does, its fullness pulls away, the new from the old, and the tear gets worse.

**Mark 2:22** Likewise, no one pours new wine into old wineskins. Otherwise, the wine will burst the skins, and both the wine and the skins are ruined. Rather, new wine is poured into fresh wineskins.”

Catechism of the Catholic Church References: Para.1265 thru 1270