



## LESSON 6

# A New Life

# 1 Share what you thought about last week's lesson.

## Introduction

Over the course of *Discovery*, we've been unpacking the richness of the Good News. Like pieces of a puzzle, the truths about Jesus have come together so that we can clearly grasp the beauty and scope of God's plan for our salvation. Last week we saw that the last piece of the puzzle is ourselves. Christ desires to be at the centre of our lives and he gives us the freedom to invite him in as our true Lord and our Saviour. We are choosing to become his disciple—his follower.

## Review

Over the past five lessons, *Discovery* has outlined the basic message of the Catholic faith, often referred to as the *kerygma*, a Greek word that means to cry or proclaim as a herald. The *kerygma* is the message the Church has proclaimed from its very beginning, and includes these four key points:

1. God created every person to have a personal relationship with him.
2. Our relationship with God has been broken through our sins.
3. Jesus restores our relationship with God through his death and resurrection (known as the Paschal Mystery).
4. God invites us to this restored relationship; each person responds to this invitation by choosing a Christ-centred life.

The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* provides a summary of the *kerygma* in its first paragraph.

“ God, infinitely perfect and blessed in himself, in a plan of sheer goodness freely created man to make him share in his own blessed life. For this reason, at every time and in every place, God draws close to man. He calls man to seek him, to know him, to love him with all his strength. He calls together all men, scattered and divided by sin, into the unity of his family, the Church. To accomplish this, when the fullness of time had come, God sent his Son as Redeemer and Savior. In his Son and through him, he invites men to become, in the Holy Spirit, his adopted children and thus heirs to his blessed life. ”

*Catechism of the Catholic Church, 1*

Let's look at how this section of the *Catechism* outlines the basic message of the *kerygma*.

## **2** How does this section of the *Catechism* describe:

**That we are created for a relationship with God?**

**The consequences of sin?**

## The solution to the problem of sin?

Our relationship with God if we accept the gift of salvation offered in Jesus?

# Personal Encounter

“ Conversion means accepting, by a personal decision, the saving sovereignty of Christ and becoming his disciple. ”

St. John Paul II  
*Redemptoris Missio*, 46

A conversion of life happens when we make a personal decision to invite Christ to be at the centre of our lives. This invitation is personal and we can expect to have a personal encounter with God. This might be a powerful experience, or it might be a delicate one. Although we won't know God fully and completely until we are in Heaven, we can certainly experience him in our lifetime. He desires for us to know him. If you want to experience him more, ask him!

**3** Describe a personal experience you have had of God's presence.

**4** How could you make yourself more available and open to God so as to encounter, know and love him better?

## Personal Prayer

Prayer is an essential part of nurturing our relationship with God. Taking time each day to pray enables us to continually recognize our need for Christ and to commit ourselves to him. Our time of personal prayer does not have to be complicated—in fact, it is a lot like talking to a close friend.

**5** What would be a good plan for you to make sure you pray and talk to Jesus every day?

# Communal Encounter

We have emphasized the unique personal encounter we can have with Jesus. This is very real and beautiful, but it's not all. Yes, we are personally known and valued by God, and at the same time we are united to all who are baptized in Christ. As children of God, we are brothers and sisters in the family of God, which is the Church.

“ He [God] calls man to seek him, to know him, to love him with all his strength. He calls together all men, scattered and divided by sin, into the unity of his family, the Church...He invites all men to become, in the Holy Spirit, his adopted children and thus heirs to his blessed life. ”

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As the family of God we are a community of believers who share a love for the Saviour. This is one reason we gather in churches, have liturgies and serve together in ministry. God's plan for us is not only an individual encounter. As the quote above notes, God has called everyone into "the unity of his family," which is the Church. He desires for us to gather and publicly worship and serve together as the Church, the Body of Christ.

## 1 CORINTHIANS 12: 12-13A

### 6 What are some examples of communal expressions of faith?

### 7 How can our communal expressions of faith enhance our personal relationship with God?

# Communal Prayer

There are many ways we can pray together as a community of faith. One of the most significant ways we pray together as a Church happens annually at every Easter Vigil Mass all over the world. In a solemn and special way, we renew our baptismal promises. Our response is a personal “I do”—but we all say it *together*. This is a powerful affirmation of how our faith is both *individual* and *communal*.

As we wrap up *Discovery* we will make this same personal and communal proclamation of faith. We will renew our baptismal promises together as a small group, just like we do at the Easter Vigil.

**+ Do you reject sin, so as to live in the freedom of God’s children?**

*R. I do*

**+ Do you reject the glamour of evil, and refuse to be mastered by sin?**

*R. I do*

**+ Do you reject Satan, father of sin and prince of darkness?**

*R. I do*

**+ Do you believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth?**

*R. I do*

**+ Do you believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord, who was born of the Virgin Mary, was crucified, died, and was buried, rose from the dead, and is now seated at the right hand of the Father?**

*R. I do*

**+ Do you believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and life everlasting?**

*R. I do*

**Together:**

*Lord Jesus, I believe that you know me and love me. I have not always chosen to love you, and have broken my relationship with you through my sins. Thank you for proving your love for me on the cross so that our relationship can be restored.*

*I open the door of my heart and I invite you to be at the centre of my life—to be my Saviour and my Lord. Direct me and help me to live the Gospel with my whole life.*

Our individual commitment to God is how we live out being a child of God. This moment of communal prayer shows us how we become brothers and sisters who are part of God’s family, the Church. Our communal life as the Church is the completion of God’s vision for his children to live as one universal family.

## Going from here

The focus of *Discovery* has been to introduce you to the *kerygma*, the basic message of the Catholic faith, and to give you the opportunity to begin or renew your relationship with God. The journey doesn’t end here! As we end this Faith Study, let’s discuss where you will go from here in your relationship with God.

**8 What is one element of your relationship with God that you would like to improve in the next month? What steps can you take to make this improvement?**

Here are some practical steps to begin growing in your relationship with God:

- Talk to God every day through prayer.
- If you have not been baptized, talk to your group leader about pursuing baptism through a local RCIA (*Rite of Christian Initiation for Adults*) program.
- Read your Bible every day, beginning with the New Testament.
- Become involved in your local parish.
- Share your faith with others.
- Celebrate the Eucharist every Sunday.
- Go to Confession on a regular basis.
- Get to know the teachings of the Catholic Church, which can offer guidance on your journey with Jesus.

# Summary

At some point, we all need to make a personal, adult decision about whether to embrace the relationship with God that he has offered to us. Jesus gives us the Holy Spirit and the guidance of the Church as sources of real help and grace that can be experienced individually and communally as we live this new life in him.

# Living It Out

## **CHALLENGE**

Foster your friendship with Jesus by taking time to pray and talk with him for at least 10 minutes every day. Foster your communal encounter with God by introducing yourself to someone at Sunday Mass.

## **MEMORIZE 2 CORINTHIANS 5:15**

*And he died for all, so that those who live might live no longer for themselves, but for him who died and was raised for them.*