

## UNIT 2: JESUS AND THE NEW COVENANT

### THE PROMISED ONE COMES

### Lesson 2: Understanding Divine Revelation

#### CONTENT:

1. Recapitulation of lesson 1.
2. God revealed himself to us first through Adam and Eve, calling them to a close friendship with Him. But they sinned and refused his friendship. God did not stop speaking to them, but promised a saviour to their descendants.
3. All through the Old Testament, God continued to relate to the people, preparing the way for His Son: Abraham, Moses, the prophets etc.
4. Finally God spoke his final 'Word' in Jesus.
5. Before he departed, Jesus commissioned the apostles to pass on his truth, to witness to him to the whole world.
6. They did this in 2 ways:
  - i. By witnessing, preaching, worship etc. [Tradition]
  - ii. Through inspired writing, [Sacred Scripture]
7. Our response to God's revelation is to believe in Him. We make an act of faith, if we are able.

REFERENCES : Matthew 28:19. Mark 9:24. Compendium of CCC: 6-13.

MATERIALS NEEDED: Handouts, pictures brought by students.

ASSIGNMENT: Bring 2 or 3 photographs of yourself (or of someone else if you can't)

#### I. STARTER:

- Last time we talked about the 'Word' of God. Let's see if you remember what we learnt. [Ask questions to one row at a time. This will be more challenging, and encourage all to participate. Ask the students to keep their files closed and answer from memory.]

- i. Who said, "Our hearts are restless until they rest in you"? [St. Augustine]
- ii. What is the final and most complete word of God to the world? [Jesus Christ]
- iii. Did Jesus exist before the world was created? [Yes. St. John said, "In the beginning the Word already existed."]
- iv. Which prophet said, 'The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light'? [Isaiah]
- v. Besides the reference we looked at, where else do you find prophecies about Jesus in the Old Testament?

*NB. Some OT prophecies are given below. This is only for your information. You need not go over them all with the students, unless you have an extra period available, in which case you could give them the references and ask them to find out what they say about Jesus.*

Psalm 22 and Isaiah 53 contain many prophecies about Jesus. Other references:

- Seed of a woman: Genesis 3:14-15;
- From the Tribe of Judah: Genesis 49:10;
- Heir to the Throne of David: Isaiah 9:6-7;
- Jesus to be born in Bethlehem: Micah 5:2
- Born of a virgin Isaiah: 7:13-14;
- Will bind up and heal the brokenhearted: Isaiah 61:1-3
- His scourging predicted: Isaiah 50:6;
- Shame, reproach and dishonor; adversaries before Him: Psalm 69:17-19;
- Jesus would be resurrected: Psalm 16:10-11; Psalm 49:15;
- His ascension to God's right hand: Psalm 68:18.

## II. DEVELOPMENT:

*[Give out handouts at this point ]*

• At our last class we also talked about how human beings look at creation and realize the existence of God. That means they use reason to figure out this truth. If you have brought a picture stick it into the space given in today's handout and complete the caption according to what you see in creation.

*[Allow students a few minutes to do this and then to share their pictures with the class]*

• Let's look now at how God revealed or showed himself to us. This is called 'Divine Revelation' DIVINE: GOD'S; REVELATION: REVEALING OR SHOWING. *[Write these words on BB. As the following points are brought out, students follow in their handouts and fill in blanks where necessary]*

1. The first stage of God's revelation was to our first parents, Adam and Eve. God gave them the world and invited them to have a close friendship with him. Did they accept this invitation? *No*. They sinned. That means they refused to believe in God's goodness. They disobeyed him, and tried to get happiness for themselves without God.

So did God crumple up his plan and throw it into the dustbin? ... No. He continued to relate to man and woman. He promised to send a Saviour, who would save them from the death they now deserved. This saviour would restore their broken friendship with God.

2. All through the Old Testament, we see that God continued to relate to the descendants of Adam and Eve, teaching them his ways, and gradually preparing the way for Christ. He first called Abraham, whom we call our Father in faith. Then he related to Abraham's descendants: Isaac, Jacob, Joseph etc. He spoke face to face with Moses, to whom he gave the Law. He spoke in a special way through the many prophets E.g. Isaiah, Jeremiah, Hosea etc

3. Finally he sent the one whom he had promised, Jesus, who was God's final Word. Jesus fulfilled God's plan of saving the world and restoring our friendship with God. With Jesus Divine Revelation was complete.

4. But God wanted his Word to reach all of us. His plan was that the whole world should come to know Jesus and experience his life and love. And so Jesus commissioned his apostles to pass on all they had learnt and to give witness to the world. He said, "Go to all peoples everywhere and make them my disciples."

• The apostles did what Christ asked. They did it in 2 ways:

1. By witnessing, preaching, worship etc This is called Sacred Tradition, (with a capital T).
2. Through inspired writing, which we call the New Testament or Sacred Scripture.

## III. REFLECTION & PRAYER:

• Now the baton is offered to you. Are you ready to accept the truth about God, and live by it? Read through the 'Act of Faith'. It is one that many Catholics profess. Are you ready to make it your own? If you have doubts and do not believe in your heart, then ask God's help.

• In Jesus' time there was a man whose son was possessed by an evil spirit. The disciples of Jesus tried but could not send out the spirit. When Jesus arrived on the scene, he spoke to the father and encouraged him to believe. He said, "Everything is possible for the person who has faith," The father cried out, "Lord I believe! Help my unbelief!" God must have heard this honest prayer, because his son was healed. If you do not believe with all your heart, make this prayer your own. Say to God, "Lord I believe. Help my unbelief."

*[The students read through the 'Act of Faith' silently. Then ask them, if they are ready, to stand and profess it aloud.]*

ASSIGNMENT: Ask the students to bring 2 or 3 photographs of themselves for the next class. NB. If you have an extra period available the students could bring pictures, magazines to make a collage of God's creation in class. It could be done in groups of 2 or 3 on a poster. An appropriate caption is written in. Eg. 'All creation says 'God is alive!' 'All kinds of everything remind me of You.' The song 'Every Tiny Star' could be sung or played.