

The Gospel According to St. John

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St. Leo the Great Catholic Church

Purpose

- Know Jesus Well
- Yearn for more

The Gospels are the Climax

CCC 125-127

- Study all of Sacred Scripture through the “lens” of Jesus’ mission
- All of the Bible points to, or builds upon, the defeat of sin and death by Jesus

Why Not Start at the Beginning?

- This has not worked for most people in our time
- Complex, crucial, potentially confusing
- You need a firm understanding of the “Senses of Scripture”
- We will cover Genesis on 29 April, read it slowly, with commentary... ***everything*** begins there

Senses of Scripture

CCC 115-118

- Literal Truth >> Foundational, the Empty Tomb
- Spiritual Truth
 - Moral, that which describes right judgment & living
 - Allegorical, which point to Jesus & the New Testament
 - Anagogical, which alludes to the End, you in Paradise

The Bible is a Library

- It is not meant to be read as a left-right book
- It pre-dates English, books, and writing itself
- It is arranged for the easy referencing of scrolls
- New Testament mirrors the Old
 - Law
 - History
 - Wisdom
 - Prophecy

Sequencing Matters

- Early
 - Foundational: Gospels and Chronology
- Middle
 - Explanatory Depth: Epistles and Prophets
- Late
 - Fortification: Specialized Texts at the end

Anytime: Wisdom Literature (Psalms, Proverbs...)

Chronology

- The Timeline across the Ages to Jesus
- Twelve Old Testament Books
- Then the Gospel Narrative & Acts of the Apostles
- This “Bloodline” runs from Abraham to Jesus
- These 19 centuries are categorized many ways:
 - The Three-fold Promise
 - The Ages of Man (6)
 - Expanding Covenants (6)

What is a “Covenant”?

- The formation of a deep and complete family bond (marital, tribal, or otherwise) that carries a death penalty should one break it
- It is the foundational principle of our relationship with God
- It explains why Jesus chose to die for us, a death we had earned many times over

Final Ground Rules

- “Dei Verbum” (The Word of God), put forth during the Second Vatican Council in 1965
 - The Whole of the Bible hangs together as a single story
 - The OT prefigures the NT
 - There are no contradictions in the teachings of the Church and Sacred Scripture
 - Traditional interpretation does matter

John's Gospel

- Jesus is One with the Eternal God
- You can live with Him forever

The Seven Signs

- Miracles of escalating power
- Each to an ever widening audience
- Much of the narrative is the testimony and defense of these “works”
- Jesus defends Himself vigorously, and makes great attempts to persuade (us)
- It begins amongst friends...

The First Sign

- Mirrors the first plague, Nile > Blood
- Mary's final words in the New Testament
- This is The Model Exchange between Mother and Son, and what we hope for in Marian Intercession
- "Woman" echoes back to the first prophecy

The Second Sign

- Still in friendly territory
- Jesus therefore said to him “Unless you see signs and wonders you will not believe.” (4:48)
- The official and all of his household believed

Trouble Begins

- Now in Jerusalem for a “Feast”
- Healed a man who was paralyzed for 38 years
- Spectacularly public, but in trouble now
 - Envy
 - “On the Sabbath”
 - “(made) himself equal with God”

Feeding the 5000

- This ultimately public miracle is mentioned in all four Gospels
- It is in friendly territory so Jesus is worried they will take Him away and make Him king
- John elaborates even further by continuing the discussion beyond the Walking on Water incident of that evening and into the Bread of Life discourse the following day.

Healing the Blind Man

- Stepping it up now...the miracles to follow are very powerful, such that “...the works of God might be made manifest...” (9:3)
- A thorough investigation by the Pharisees follows, with the simple testimony of the healed man being the most poignant... (9:24-34)

The Raising of Lazarus

- The Second most powerful miracle of Jesus' ministry
- Poignant prelude with disciples
- The power and fame of this event lead to his glorious reception on Palm Sunday
- It also leads the High Priest Caiaphas and the Pharisees to actively plot his murder (11:53)

The Book of Glory

- The Foot Washing
- Last Supper
- The High Priestly Prayer
- Crucifixion
- Resurrection

The Four Loves

- A main concept of Scripture Study, because it is our primary understanding of God
- Four different words in the Greek NT
 - Eros > Erotic/Creative love
 - Storge > Familial love
 - Phila > Affection of friends
 - Agape > Caritas > Charity > Willing Gift-Love
- “Consubstantial with the Father” ...the substance of the Trinitarian God is Gift-Love (Caritas, Agape)

Threads to the Beginning

- “Behold the Lamb of God” (1:29)
 - Genesis 22, Abraham, Isaac and the Lamb
- “The Word Became Flesh and Dwelt Among Us, full of grace and truth...” (1:14)
 - Genesis 3, The seed of the woman will destroy death
- “In the Beginning was the WORD” (1:1)
 - Genesis 1, through Him (JC) all things were made

See You in April

“he who hears My word and believes Him who sent Me,
has eternal life” (5:24)