

### Weekly Reflections

What Bible verse was used for the basis of last Sunday's sermon?

What were some of the main takeaways? What did you learn?

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**Point to Ponder.....**

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**Call to Action.....**

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## Transform Your Nature, Using Jesus as Your Example: *Me and God*

<p><b>I wonder...</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Why is a relationship with God, the Father; God, the Son; God, the Holy Spirit important?</li> <li>➤ How do I develop this relationship?</li> <li>➤ How will I benefit from this relationship with the Trinity?</li> </ul>	<p><b>I believe...</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ God, the Father is my creator and sustainer; God, the Son is my redeemer; and God, the Holy Spirit is my comforter and helper, who leads into all truth. (Catechism Q&amp;A question 5)</li> <li>➤ Through prayer, experiencing God's word and sacraments in the divine services, and applying His wisdom, my relationship with God will grow. (Catechism Q&amp;A question 613)</li> <li>➤ By being in a relationship with God, we become who God intended us to be. (Catechism Q&amp;A questions 178, 247)</li> </ul>
<p>Bible: Exodus 29:45, Matthew 1:22-23, Romans 5:11;          Catechism Q&amp;A questions 5, 29-36, 178, 247, 613, 715.          Catechism Q&amp;A page 251 (Articles of Faith 1, 2, 3).</p>	

### 1. What is required in order to have a relationship with someone?

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### 2. How does Christ make our relationship with God possible?

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### 3. What can we do to keep our relationship with God, the Father; God, the Son; God, the Holy Spirit strong; what do you do to keep your relationship with your friends strong?

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### 4. How will I benefit from this relationship with the Trinity?

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**Point to Ponder:** What do you want out of a relationship with God? How has your relationship with God grown so far in your life?

**Call to Action:** Identify challenges (actions, behaviors, attitudes) that are preventing your relationship with God from growing to a level that you want it to be at. Make a plan to address 1 of the challenges this semester. Feel free to ask a fellow student or a youth leader to help hold you accountable to the plan.

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**Call to Action.....**

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## Transform Your Nature, Using Jesus as Your Example: *Prayer*

<b>I wonder...</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ What is prayer?</li> <li>➤ What should a prayer consist of?</li> <li>➤ What does prayer do for us as Christians and why is it necessary?</li> </ul>	<b>I believe...</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Prayer is an opportunity given by God for human beings to have a connection with Him. (Q&amp;A question 715)</li> <li>➤ Prayer should come from the heart and should consist of adoration, thanksgiving, intercessions, and pleas. (Q&amp;A question 723)</li> <li>➤ Prayer is described as the “breathing of the soul” and allows us to connect to God through conversation. (Q&amp;A question 716)</li> </ul>
<b>References:</b> Matthew 6:6-13, Philippians 4:6; Catechism Q&A questions 622, 715-728; Q&A page 254 (Lord’s Prayer)	

**Read the Lord’s prayer and write it using your own words:**

<b>From the gospel of Matthew:</b> Our Father in heaven, hallowed be Your name. Your kingdom come. Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. And do not lead us into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one. For Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.	<b>Your own words:</b> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
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**1. What are the main components of prayer?**

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**2. What are the effects of prayer on us and those around us?**

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**3. How can or should our prayers change over time?**

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**Point to Ponder:** How much time do you spend in prayer compared to other activities in your life? What adjustments can you make to your schedule to give prayer a more prominent focus?

**Call to Action:** Research ‘vigorous verbs’ online. Find one to incorporate into your prayers this week. Write that phrase out and bring it to the next small group.

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**Call to Action.....**

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## Transform Your Nature, Using Jesus as Your Example: *Why do I need to be like Jesus?*

<p><b>I wonder...</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Who is Jesus?</li> <li>➤ How do we know what Jesus Christ was like?</li> <li>➤ Why do I need to be like Jesus?</li> <li>➤ How will my character impact those around me?</li> </ul>	<p><b>I believe...</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Jesus is God, the Son. He is true Man and true God. He has two natures – human and divine. Jesus is like other human beings but without sin. (Catechism Q&amp;A questions 94, 103, 104)</li> <li>➤ I learn what Jesus was like through the written word (Holy Scripture) and preached word (divine service) as well as experiencing Him in Holy Communion. (Catechism Q&amp;A questions 25, 120, 512, 624, 626)</li> <li>➤ Jesus Christ is the example and teacher of perfection for which mankind is to strive. (Catechism 3.1.8) (Catechism Q&amp;A question 60)</li> <li>➤ Living like Jesus in word and deed will help me to spread the gospel. (John 13:34-35)</li> </ul>
<p><b>References:</b> John 13:13-17, Hebrews 12:2, 1 Corinthians 11:1, Ephesians 5:1-2, Colossians 3:17; John 13:34-35. Catechism Q&amp;A questions 25, 60, 93, 94, 103, 104, 120, 512, 565, 624, 626 Catechism 3.1.8</p>	

1. What do you know about Jesus already?

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2. Think about a friendship you've made in the past year or so. How did that friendship develop?

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3. Now think about a friendship you've had for a long time. Why have you maintained that relationship? How did you keep it going?

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4. How did you start your relationship with Jesus? How can you develop/maintain your relationship with Jesus?

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5. Why do we want to be like Jesus?

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**Point to Ponder:** Now that you've identified the characteristic of Jesus that you would like to work on, what does it mean to demonstrate that characteristic?

**Call to Action:** This week, identify and affirm a characteristic of Jesus that you see in someone from your congregation. Share with them that you see that characteristic of Jesus and thank them for being an example.

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**Call to Action.....**

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## Transform Your Nature, Using Jesus as Your Example: *Faith*

### Have you ever wondered...

- What is faith?
- Why do we need faith?
- What can strengthen my faith?

### I believe...

- Faith is an act of God's grace upon a human being, in other words, a gift. (Catechism Q&A question 10). Faith is granted and reinforced by the Holy Spirit, and comes about through the preaching of the gospel on the foundation of Holy Scripture. (Catechism Q&A question 11)
- Faith leads human beings to recognize God, trust in God, and lead a life in accordance with the will of God. (Catechism Q&A question 10)
- The fear of God and sincere prayer for the correct understanding of Holy Scripture are principles for strengthening faith through the study of the Bible. (Catechism Q&A question 27)

**References:** Matthew 17:14-21; Hebrews 11:1; Catechism Q&A questions: 1-11, 27-28, 33-36, 239-242, 279, 716

### 1. How is our life like the obstacle course?

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### 2. Would the blindfolded student have gotten through the obstacle course without the leader? How would it have been different?

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### 3. Think of another time in your life where you have felt like you were blindfolded (not literally) and had to follow the guidance or directions of someone else to get through a situation. What happened in that situation?

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### 4. Where does our faith come from?

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### 5. Why is it important for us to have faith and for it to grow and not stay small? What are some ways we can grow our faith?

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**Point to Ponder:** What would our lives truly be like without faith? How would our lives be different?

**Call to Action:** This week create a realistic list of things you want to work on to strengthen your faith going forward. Be ready to share at least one thing from your list next week.



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## Transform Your Nature, Using Jesus as Your Example: *Hope*

<p><b>Have you ever wondered...</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ What is Christian hope?</li> <li>➤ What do we hope for?</li> <li>➤ What do Christians base their hope on?</li> </ul>	<p><b>I believe...</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Christian hope is our confident expectation that God will fulfill his promises for our future. (Catechism Q&amp;A question 40)</li> <li>➤ Our hope is for the return of the Lord Jesus and that we will be taken with Him. (Catechism Q&amp;A question 555)</li> <li>➤ Our hope is founded in the offer of salvation and eternal fellowship with God. (Catechism Q&amp;A question 247)</li> </ul>
<p><b>References:</b></p> <p>Bible verses: Luke 8:40-48, Romans 5:1-5, Romans 8:38-39, 1 Corinthians 13:13, Hebrews 6:18-19, 1 Peter 3:15; Catechism Q&amp;A questions 40, 247, 549, 550, 555; Catechism Q&amp;A page 252 (9<sup>th</sup> Article of Faith)</p>	

### 1. What is the difference between “regular” hope and Christian hope?

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### 2. What are some concrete actions we can do if we, or a friend of ours, starts to feel hopeless?

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### 3. How can strong hope keep us motivated in our lives?

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**Point to Ponder:** How are ‘hope’ and ‘faith’ similar? How are ‘hope’ and ‘faith’ different?

**Call to Action:** This week, think how you would respond if someone asked about the hope in your heart and you had to explain/defend it (as referenced in 1 Peter 3:15). Actually articulate and right down a sentence, or a few, explaining your hope in Jesus Christ. Consider asking someone in the congregation to help articulate it with you if you need assistance.

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**Call to Action.....**

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## Transform Your Nature, Using Jesus as Your Example: *Love*

<p><b>Have you ever wondered...</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Why do I love God?</li> <li>➤ Why should I love my neighbor?</li> <li>➤ How do I show love to my neighbor?</li> <li>➤ Why and how should I love my enemies?</li> </ul>	<p><b>I believe...</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ We love God because He first loved us. (Catechism Q&amp;A question 290)</li> <li>➤ One of the greatest of the commandments is to love your neighbor. (Catechism Q&amp;A question 155, 287)</li> <li>➤ We must not close our eyes to the distress of others, but rather provide help. (Catechism Q&amp;A question 155)</li> <li>➤ Jesus commanded us to love our enemies and fulfilled this command in unparalleled fashion when He was on the cross. (Catechism Q&amp;A question 174; Matthew 5:44)</li> </ul>
<p><b>References:</b> Bible verses: Matthew 5:44, Matthew 22:37-40, Mark 12:30-31, Luke 10:25-29, Luke 10:30-37, John 3:16; Catechism Q&amp;A questions 57, 155, 174, 285 - 288, 290, 291</p>	

### 1. Why does God love us? How do we know?

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### 2. If God loves us that much, how do we respond?

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### 3. How can we show our love for our neighbor within the congregation? What is our responsibility?

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### 4. What happens when we "love one another" in the congregation?

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**Point to Ponder:** Jesus is our example. We want to transform our nature to be loving like He was, selflessly and without judgement.

**Call to Action:** This week, look for a specific way you will show love to someone. Whom are you going to show that love to? How are you going to show that love? Be prepared to share an experience of how you showed love to someone and what happened as a result. How did you feel? How did the other person feel? Do you feel like you loved like Jesus loves? Was the task difficult or easy?

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## Transform Your Nature, Using Jesus as Your Example: *The Fruit of the Spirit*

<b>Have you ever wondered...</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ What is the fruit of the Spirit?</li> <li>➤ How do I get it?</li> <li>➤ Why do I need it or want it?</li> </ul>	<b>I believe...</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ The fruit of the Spirit are 9 divine attributes and personality qualities described in Galatians 5:22-23 - love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faith, gentleness, and self-control. (Catechism Q&amp;A question 530)</li> <li>➤ These 9 qualities come directly from the Holy Spirit and not from ourselves. (Catechism Q&amp;A question 530)</li> <li>➤ God is sharing part of His divine nature with us, and His nature will shine through us and draw others to Him. (Catechism Q&amp;A question 530)</li> </ul>
<b>References:</b> Bible verses: Matthew 11:25-30, Matthew 14:28-32, Matthew 26:47-54, Matthew 27:45-53, Luke 22:49-51, Luke 23:32-34, John 10:7-16, John 12:27-28, John 14:25-31, John 15:5-8, John 16:19-24, Galatians 5:22-23; Catechism Q&A question 530	

Fruit	My meaning	Godly meaning
Love		
Joy		
Peace		
Patience		
Kindness		
Goodness		
Faith		
Gentleness		
Self-Control		

**Point to Ponder:** Which fruit of the Spirit do you feel you demonstrate well? Which one do you feel needs work?

**Call to Action:** Every day for the next 9 days, pick a fruit to intentionally live out and demonstrate it as God would want you to.

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**Call to Action.....**

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## Transform Your Nature, Using Jesus as Your Example: *You Don't Win with Sin*

<b>I wonder...</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ What is sin?</li> <li>➤ Why do we sin?</li> <li>➤ Where does it come from?</li> <li>➤ What is the consequence of sin?</li> </ul>	<b>I believe...</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Sin is everything that is contrary to the will of God and is contrary to His being (Catechism Q&amp;A question 229)</li> <li>➤ The origin of sin (fall into sin) is Adam and Eve's disobedience of God's commandment to not eat fruit from the tree of knowledge of good and evil (Catechism Q&amp;A question 223)</li> <li>➤ I am born with the inclination to sin (concupiscence) (Catechism Q&amp;A question 227)</li> <li>➤ Sin causes separation between God and me, though God continues to love me (Catechism Q&amp;A question 227)</li> </ul>
<b>References:</b> Bible verses: Genesis 3:1-6, Psalm 139:23-24, Matthew 16:22-24, Romans 6:23 Catechism Q&A questions 215-223, 227, 229, 232-237, page 253	

**Read the following story and think of how it parallels what sin is for us. Then answer the following questions:**

"A young woman was picked up for speeding. She was ticketed and taken before the judge. The judge read off the citation and said, "Guilty or not guilty?" The woman replied, "Guilty." The judge brought down the gavel and fined her \$100 or ten days. Then an amazing thing took place. The judge stood up, took off his robe, walked down around in front, took out his billfold, and paid the fine." (An excerpt from "He's More than a Carpenter, McDowell, 1977)

**1. What part of the story demonstrates the problem?**

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**2. Why did this woman break the law?**

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**3. Where did the woman's inclination to break the law come from?**

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**4. What was the consequence of the woman's disobedience of the law?**

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**5. Why couldn't the judge just have mercy on her and let her go?**

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**Point to Ponder:** Why did the judge come down and pay her fine?

**Call to Action:** This week, reflect on a sin you recently committed. Why was it a sin? Why did you do it? Was there a price to you had to pay? If yes, what was it? How does taking time to reflect on your sin help you transform your nature?



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**Point to Ponder...**

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**Call to Action...**

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## Transform Your Nature, Using Jesus as Your Example: *To forgive is divine*

<b>I wonder...</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ How are sins forgiven?</li> <li>➤ Who forgives sins?</li> <li>➤ What must I do to be forgiven?</li> <li>➤ What are the effects of the forgiveness of sins?</li> </ul>	<b>I believe...</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Sins can be forgiven because God sent His Son to the earth. With Jesus' death on the cross, He brought the eternally valid sacrifice for the forgiveness of sins. (Catechism Q&amp;A question 646)</li> <li>➤ The triune God forgives my sins. (Catechism Q&amp;A question 647)</li> <li>➤ In order to obtain forgiveness, I must believe that Jesus Christ is my redeemer and that He commissioned the Apostles to proclaim forgiveness of sins. I must acknowledge and repent my sins, want to be reconciled with God, and strive to overcome my weaknesses and reconcile with others. (Catechism Q&amp;A question 649)</li> <li>➤ Forgiveness cleanses me, cancels out my guilt, so the peace of Jesus Christ fills me, and I no longer fear the consequence of sin. (Catechism Q&amp;A question 652)</li> </ul>
<b>References:</b> Bible verses: Matthew 6:14-15, Romans 6:23, 1 John 1:9-10 Catechism Q&A questions 247, 644 – 652	

**Read Part 2 of the story and discuss what parts of the story demonstrates forgiveness and why. Then answer the following questions:**

"The judge was her father. He loved his daughter, yet he was a just judge. His daughter had broken the law and he couldn't simply say to her, 'Because I love you so much, I forgive you. You may leave.' If he had done that, he wouldn't have been a righteous judge. He wouldn't have upheld the law. But he loved his daughter so much that he was willing to take off his judicial robe and come down in front and represent her as her father and pay the fine." (excerpt from "He's More than a Carpenter", McDowell, 1977)

**1. How is this like what God did for us through Jesus Christ? How does this relate to the hook activity?**

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**2. Why can't the judge / God just forgive, why does the "fine" have to be paid? How does this relate to the hook activity?**

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**3. What could have prevented the judge/woman's father from paying the fine?**

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**4. What emotions do you think the woman felt knowing her father/God was willing to do this for her? How does this relate to the hook activity?**

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**5. What are situations that would require you to extend forgiveness to someone?**

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**Point to Ponder:** God forgives our sins. The Absolution during the divine service may not be the exact moment our sin is forgiven. But rather, the Absolution is the proclamation that our sins have been if we've gone through the necessary steps of realizing our sin, repenting, and seeking reconciliation.

**Call to Action:** The words of the Absolution are found in the Catechism Q&A question 644. This week, pick out a phrase from the Absolution that is the most meaningful to you. Explain to a family member or friend why this phrase means so much to you.

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**Point to Ponder...**

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**Call to Action...**

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## Transform Your Nature, Using Jesus as Your Example: *Marvelous Grace*

<b>I wonder...</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ What is grace?</li> <li>➤ How can I obtain grace?</li> <li>➤ What effect will grace have upon me?</li> </ul>	<b>I believe...</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Grace is a gift from God, demonstrated that He accepts human being, who are entangled in sin. (Catechism Q&amp;A question 58)</li> <li>➤ I must recognize that I am a sinner, and the only way I can be reconciled with God is through my belief in Jesus Christ. Only through His grace can stand righteous before God. (Catechism Q&amp;A question 278)</li> <li>➤ When I fully grasp how incredible the gift of grace is, it will create humble thankfulness in me, a desire to live a holy life demonstrated in part by my love for others, and in my good works. (Catechism Q&amp;A questions 156, 279)</li> </ul>
<b>References:</b> Bible verses: Matthew 20:1-16, Luke 19:1-10, John 8:7, John 18:17, 25, 27, Acts 7:54-60 Catechism Q&A questions 58, 156, 277-279	

**Read and listen to “Amazing Grace (My chains are gone)” and then answer these questions for the first 4 stanzas:**  
**What is an example from the Bible or everyday life that supports the focus of the stanza? How does this demonstrate that grace is marvelous?**

*Amazing grace how sweet the sound  
 That saved a wretch like me  
 I once was lost, but now I'm found  
 Was blind, but now I see*

*My chains are gone I've been set free  
 My God, my Savior has ransomed me  
 And like a flood His mercy rains  
 Unending love, Amazing grace*

*The earth shall soon dissolve like snow  
 The sun forbear to shine  
 But God, Who called me here below  
 Will be forever mine  
 Will be forever mine  
 You are forever mine*

*'Twas grace that taught my heart to fear  
 And grace my fears relieved  
 How precious did that grace appear  
 The hour I first believed*

*The Lord has promised good to me  
 His word my hope secures  
 He will my shield and portion be  
 As long as life endures*

**Stanza 1:**

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**Stanza 2:**

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**Stanza 3:**

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**Stanza 4:**

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**Stanza 5:**

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**Point to Ponder:** What is so amazing about grace? How would you describe God's grace to a friend at school?

**Call to Action:** This week, pray for God to reveal how He's been gracious to you so far this school year.

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**Point to Ponder.....**

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**Call to Action.....**

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## Transform Your Nature, Using Jesus as Your Example: *Holy Communion*

<p><b>Have you ever wondered...</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Why is Holy Communion an important part of my life?</li> <li>➤ How did Holy Communion come into being?</li> <li>➤ What happens during Holy Communion?</li> </ul>	<p><b>I believe...</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Holy Communion is celebrated in every divine service because it sustains human beings in their fellowship of life with Jesus Christ. (Catechism Q&amp;A question 505)</li> <li>➤ Jesus instituted Holy Communion with His Apostles on the eve of His crucifixion. (Catechism Q&amp;A question 494)</li> <li>➤ Those who partake in Holy Communion thereby profess their belief in the death, resurrection, and return of Jesus Christ. (Catechism Q&amp;A question 500)</li> </ul>
<p><b>References:</b> Bible verses: Matthew 26:17-30, 1 Corinthians 11:23-30          Catechism Q&amp;A questions 494-514; Catechism Q&amp;A page 252, 7th Article of Faith</p>	

**Read the words of the consecration for Holy Communion:** "In the name of God, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, I consecrate bread and wine for Holy Communion and lay thereupon the once brought eternally valid sacrifice of Jesus Christ. For the Lord took bread and wine, gave thanks and said: 'This is My body which is broken for you. This is My blood of the new covenant given for many for the remission of sins. Eat and drink! Do this in remembrance of Me.' For as often as you eat this bread and drink this wine, you proclaim the Lord's death till He comes. Amen!"

1. Why do you think Jesus wants us to celebrate Holy Communion together each Sunday?

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2. Why do you think the Absolution and Holy Communion are celebrated together?

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3. What else needs to happen before Holy Communion for us to partake worthily?

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4. What are the effects of Holy Communion?

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**Point to Ponder:** Why do you think Jesus chose a "meal" as the setting for celebrating Holy Communion?

**Call to Action:** Next time you celebrate Holy Communion, when the minister says, "the body and blood of Jesus given for you", mentally say your name afterwards to emphasize that Holy Communion is the most intimate experience you can have with Jesus.

## Weekly Reflections

What Bible verse was used for the basis of last Sunday's sermon?

What were some of the main takeaways? What did you learn?

So far this week, how have you applied what you learned from the sermon last Sunday?

Going forward, how will you apply what you learned from the sermon last Sunday?

**Point to Ponder...**

**Call to Action...**

## Transform Your Nature, Using Jesus as Your Example: *IGNITE*

Why is your relationship with God, the Father; God, the Son; and God, the Holy Spirit important to you?

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How can prayer strengthen your relationship with God?

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How do you demonstrate the characteristics of Christ at home, with friends, with strangers?

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How has your faith in our heavenly Father changed or grown in the past semester?

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Explain how our hope in our eternal future with God effects what we do today?

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How have you helped someone in need in the past few weeks?

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Which Fruit of the Spirit has improved within you and which one(s) stills needs some work?

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What sins are you struggling with and what are you doing to overcome them?

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Knowing what Christ sacrificed for you, how has this changed the way you respond when others hurt you?

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What thoughts and feelings do you have during Holy Communion?

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### A Point to Ponder....

- In what way do you feel you've spiritually grown or changed this semester?

### A Call to Action...

- This week, write a letter/prayer to God about the thing that stuck with you the most from this "T" semester. You can thank Him for it, you can ask Him for help in growing in it- just talk with Him about it.