

RCIA: INQUIRY SESSION FIVE

MARY AND THE SAINTS

Week: 31/10/22-06/11/22

1. Mary.

- Mary is the Mother of Jesus, the Mother of the Son of God, the Mother of God.
- Part of God's plan for the Mother of his Son was that she be conceived free from Original Sin. We call this the *Immaculate Conception*.
- The Holy Spirit made possible the conception of Jesus in Mary's womb. "Mary was always a virgin, both in conceiving Jesus, giving birth to him and remaining virgin ever after."¹
- After her death Mary was taken up body and soul into heavenly glory. This is called the *Assumption* of Mary into heaven.
- Christians do not adore Mary but pray for her intercession on our behalf.
- In 1879 the Blessed Virgin appeared at Knock, in County Mayo. Our Lady gave no verbal message, and made no formal address.
- The Rosary is a prayer which venerates Mary.

2. The Saints.

- A saint is "a person who, after having lived a life of virtue, dies in the state of grace and has been granted the reward of eternal life by God."²
- We are all called to be saints.
- The saints in heaven unceasingly intercede for those on earth.
- The saints serve as models and inspiration to us.
- Since 993AD the Church has officially and solemnly declared some deceased members of the faithful to be saints.
- The *Feast of All Saints* is celebrated on 1st November every year. Halloween is celebrated on the day before *All Saints* – on 31st October.
- Saints' names are regularly chosen at Baptism and Confirmation.

3. Gospel Reflection: Sunday 06/11/22 is the Thirty-Second Sunday in Ordinary Time (Year C) and the Gospel reading is Lk. 20:27-38. The text

¹ Irish Episcopal Conference, *Irish Catholic Catechism for Adults*, p. 160.

² Irish Episcopal Conference, *Irish Catholic Catechism for Adults*, p. 567.

of the reading is below. The following format will be used for all Gospel reflections:

- Read the text aloud.
- Pause for a minute's silence.
- Read the text aloud again.
- Ask everyone to pick a word or a phrase that struck them. They just say the word or phrase without comment or discussion.
- Read the text again.
- Ask those present to comment on their word or phrase. What struck them about it? Why/how is it speaking to them?
- Continue with the discussion. The following questions may be helpful: What does this mean to me? How does it make me feel? Did I find the text disturbing/hopeful/confusing? What images of God emerge for me? What do I think that God is saying in this text? What impact does this have on my life?

GOSPEL READING

Reader: The Lord be with you.

Response: And with your spirit.

Reader: A reading from the holy Gospel according to Luke.

Response: Glory to you, O Lord.

Some Sadducees – those who say that there is no resurrection- approached Jesus and they put this question to him, ‘Master, we have it from Moses in writing that if a man’s married brother dies childless, the man must marry the widow to raise up children for his brother. Well, then, there were seven brothers. The first, having married a wife, died childless. The second and then the third married the widow. And the same with all seven, they died leaving no children. Finally the woman herself died. Now, at the resurrection, to which of them will she be wife since she had been married to all seven?’

Jesus replied, ‘The children of this world take wives and husbands, but those who are judged worthy of a place in the other world and in the resurrection from the dead do not marry because they can no longer die, for they are the same as the angels, and being children of the resurrection they are sons of God. And Moses himself implies that the dead rise again, in the passage about the bush where he calls the Lord the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob. Now he is God, not of the dead, but of the living; for to him all men are in fact alive.’

Reader: The Gospel of the Lord.

Response: Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

4. Final Reflection:

Remember, O most gracious Virgin Mary,
that never was it known that anyone
who fled to thy protection,
implored thy help or sought thy
intercession was left unaided.

Inspired with this confidence, I fly unto thee,
O Virgin of Virgins, my Mother.

To thee do I come. Before thee I stand, sinful and sorrowful.
O Mother of the Word Incarnate, despise not my petitions,
but in thy mercy hear and answer me. Amen.

- *St. Bernard of Clairvaux*