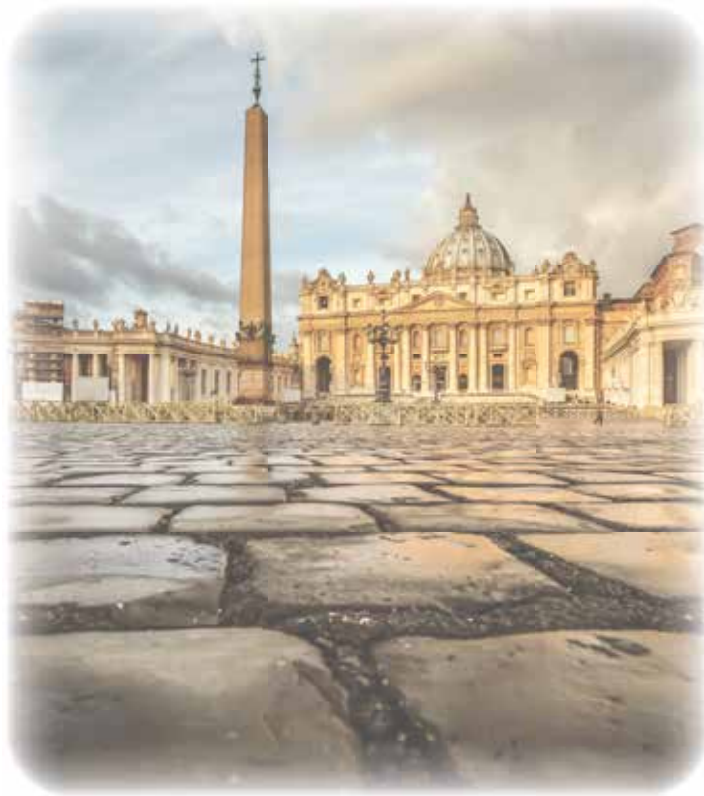


Session 1



THE JOURNEY OF FAITH



SYMBOLON
THE CATHOLIC FAITH EXPLAINED

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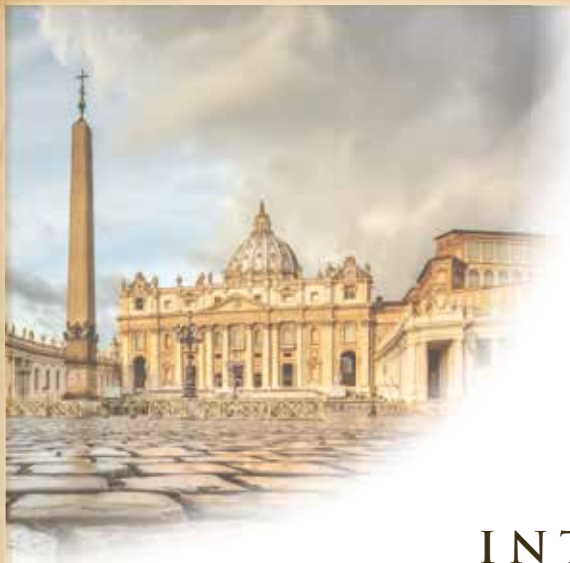
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THE JOURNEY OF FAITH: Trinity, Faith, & the God Who Is Love

INTRODUCTION


Welcome to the first session of *Symbolon*. This week you and your fellow participants are beginning a journey of faith that will delve into the heart of the teachings of the Catholic faith. Some of the things we cover you may already be familiar with, and others may be totally new, but today we begin with some basic fundamentals like the Creed—the statement of belief that lies at the heart of the faith—and the Trinity, the great mystery of the one God who exists as three Persons.

May this journey we are beginning prove to be rewarding, inspiring, and most of all life-changing!

THIS SESSION WILL COVER:

- **The God who is Love—the mystery of the Holy Trinity**
- **Why God made us and the relationship he wants to have with us**
- **How faith is our response to God's invitation**
- **How to live our relationship with God: three practical tips for prayer**

OPENING PRAYER

 “O LORD, you have searched me and known me.
You know when I sit down
and when I rise up;
you discern my thoughts from far away.
You search out my path
and my lying down,
and are acquainted with all my ways.
Even before a word is on my tongue,
O LORD, you know it completely.
For it was you
who formed my inward parts;
you knit me together
in my mother’s womb.
I praise you, for I am fearfully and
wonderfully made.” —Psalm 139:1-4, 13-14



“Prayer is the inner bath of love into which the soul plunges itself.”
—St. John Vianney

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Faith is our response to the God who longs to make himself known to us. How do we make that response and how is faith more than just believing in God?
2. The Holy Trinity is revealed to us through Jesus Christ. In other words, God wanted us to know, as the *Catechism* says, that “God is one but not solitary” (CCC 254).

Why do you think God wants you to know that he is not solitary?

3. According to the video, what are three key elements of prayer?

CALL TO CONVERSION

After spending a few moments in prayer, write down your thoughts and reflections on the following questions:

#1 Jesus says to each of us, “Come, follow me.” Envision Jesus saying that to you right now. How would you respond? What fears or hesitations might you have about following Jesus in your life? Remember that Jesus repeatedly said, “Do not be afraid.”



#2 As in any relationship, a relationship with God involves conversation. What can you do this week to make more time for prayer—for talking to God—in my life? Choose a time of day that you will reserve for getting to know God better. You may want to put it as an appointment in your calendar so that you don't forget.

#3 Reflect on the following quote about prayer from St. Ignatius of Loyola, the founder of the order of Jesuits.

“We must speak to God as a friend speaks to his friend, servant to his master; now asking some favor, now acknowledging our faults, and communicating to Him all that concerns us, our thoughts, our fears, our projects, our desires, and in all things seeking His counsel.”

What is your experience with prayer? Have you ever spoken to God as a friend? Do you feel comfortable sharing all of your thoughts, even

your fears and desires, with God? Write down one fear and one desire that you could share with God this week.

#4 Jesus called those who came to him to believe in him, that they might have life abundant. Not everyone, however, answered the call to follow him. How will you respond?

CLOSING PRAYER

Psalm 23

The LORD is my shepherd,
there is nothing I lack.
In green pastures he makes me lie down;
to still waters he leads me;
he restores my soul.
He guides me along right paths
for the sake of his name.
Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death,
I will fear no evil, for you are with me;
your rod and your staff comfort me.
You set a table before me
in front of my enemies;
You anoint my head with oil;
my cup overflows.
Indeed, goodness and mercy will pursue me
all the days of my life;
I will dwell in the house of the LORD
for endless days.



SCRIPTURE VERSE FOR THE WEEK

Here is a verse from the Bible that you can memorize and reflect on this week to help you apply today's session to your daily life:



“With all of these, take the shield of faith, with which you will be able to quench all the flaming arrows of the evil one.”

—Ephesians 6:16

DO YOU WANT TO HAVE A MORE PERSONAL RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD?

TO ENRICH YOUR CATHOLIC FAITH, VISIT FORMED.org

Where you'll find helpful videos, audio presentations, and ebooks from the most trustworthy presenters in the Catholic world.

For Further Reading:

For more in-depth reading about the journey of faith, see the following *Catechism* passages:

- *Faith as our response to God: CCC 166*
- *Prayer: CCC 2725, 2737, 2742–2745*
- *Why God made us: CCC 294*
- *The Trinity: CCC 238–248*

If you don't have an approved Catholic translation of the Bible, such as the New American Bible or the Revised Standard Version Catholic Edition, in your home, obtain one or find one online at www.ignatius.com

Other Resources:

- *United States Catholic Catechism for Adults, Chapters 1, 5, 35, 36*
- *Time for God by Jacques Philippe*
- *Introduction to the Devout Life by St. Francis de Sales*
- *Praying Scripture for a Change by Tim Gray*

