



Catechist Guide for the PowerPoint Presentation on "The Call to Discipleship"

Creation, Original Sin, Baptism, and Holiness

The bullet-point • below means click to proceed through the slide.

Slide 1: Title Slide

Open class with a prayer and a hymn from last Sunday's Mass.

Revisit last Sunday's theme ...Ask the class:

What stood out for you in the readings or homily or discussion afterward?

Slide 2:

Ask the class:

- **Q: What was God's first creation on our earth?**

- Answer: Nature

- **Read Genesis 1:1-25**

- God created

1. earth's rotation around the sun
2. water
3. sky / atmosphere
4. land
5. vegetation / food
6. animal life

- In other words...

- God's first revelation of himself was natural – "in nature".

- God still reveals himself by natural means.

- **Q: How have you experienced God in nature?**

Slide 3:

- **Read Genesis 1:26-30**

- Now we see God beginning to reveal himself through humans. We meet God in each other.

- Since God gave birth to nature and then to us, we are brothers & sisters to Nature.

- **Q: Which saint does this remind you of?**

- Answer: St. Francis of Assisi

- How well do we take care of Nature?

"Fill the earth and subdue it" does not mean abuse it and destroy it.

- Nature is redeemed by the same Redeemer that we are.

- Who's the Redeemer?
- What does "redeem" mean?
- Answer: Trading something of lesser value for something greater (like redeeming a coupon).
- Jesus redeems us from our sinful history and raises us to divine life.

PREVIEW

Slide 4:

- When we love God and imitate Christ, we reveal God's goodness to others.
- When we love Nature and take good care of her, Nature reveals our goodness & our love for God.
- **Q: How does nature reflect our love for God?**
- As we saw in the creation of man & woman, God reveals himself through relationships.
- **Q: How does marriage reflect our love for God?**
- Marriage is sacred because the union between one man & one woman reveals God's unity with us.

Slide 5:

- **Read Genesis 1:31**
- "God looked at everything he had made, and he found it very good."
- He created Paradise
- **Q: What is the supernatural (divine) Paradise called?**
Answer: Heaven
- God's original plan for us was to live in Paradise on earth
 - Our dissatisfaction with life on this earth is our inborn longing to return to Paradise.
- **Read Genesis 2:4-9**
- The Garden of Eden is the name given to the earthly – natural – paradise.
- **Q: What was the center of natural paradise?**
- Answer: The Tree of Life.
- **Q: What does the Tree of Life represent?**
- Answer: Divine Life
 - We are nourished, shaded, and protected by Divine Life.
 - Death does not exist.
- **Q: What's the other tree of importance?**
- Answer: Knowledge of good and evil.
- **Q: What does this tree represent?**
- Answer: God's all-knowing nature.

Slide 6:

- **Read Genesis 2:16-17**
- **Now read Genesis 2:18-20**
Notice that this says God created man before creating animals.
- **There are two versions of the story of creation.**
 - This one is a much older version.
The first one originated about 6 centuries before Christ.
This one about 1000 years before Christ.
 - Moses compiled sacred stories that had been handed down orally to put together the Book of Genesis.
 - It's not a history book. Instead of trying to interpret the creation stories literally, we learn from the theological truths being explained by the stories.
- **Continue with the story ... Read Genesis 2:21-25**
- **Q: What's the significance of the rib?**
- Answer: Not from the foot, not from the head, but from the side.
Husband and wife are to be side by side, help-mates, neither superior or inferior to the other.

PREVIEW

- **Back to Genesis 2:16-17**
- **Q: Why would the tree of knowledge produce death?**
 - Our limited human brains can only know limited amounts of information.
 - Only God can know everything.
 - Only God can understand everything in true perspective regarding what's good and what's evil and what's what in a mix of good and evil.
 - If we don't live in *His* understanding, we fall into evil.
- **Read Matthew 7:1-5** (everyone: keep a finger in Genesis)
- Only God can see what's in a person's heart when he sins, what's motivating him, what's lacking in his conscience formation, etc.

Slide 7:

- **Read Genesis 3:1-6**
- **Q: What was the woman's responsibility here?**
- Answer: To listen to God and listen well and remain in the truth.
Notice what she told the serpent:
- "You shall not eat the tree in the center of the garden or even touch it, lest you die."
- **Q: What did God really say? Read Genesis 2:17.**
- Answer: God said, "You shall not eat from it." He said nothing about touching it!
- We are supposed to be able to safely touch upon our understanding of what's good and what's evil: This is good conscience formation.
- But we cannot rely on it for our nourishment and life, since we have only a partial understanding: We have to rely on God's guidance and his Word and commandments.

Slide 8:

- **Q: What was the man's responsibility when the woman was tempted to break God's commandment?**
- Answer: His responsibility was to protect her by leading her in the ways of God.
- **Read Ephesians 5:25-27**
- Man's vocation is to be Christ for his wife.
(A priest's vocation is to be Christ for the parish, which is his bride.)
- **Q: What did the serpent Satan do?**
- Answer: Caused disunity between God and humans.
How?
- Two lies:
 - 1. "God lied to you." >>
This caused distrust in God.
 - 2. "You can be like gods" >>
This caused the illusion that we don't need God, we can trust ourselves instead.
- This breaking away from union with God is called "Original Sin".

Slide 9:

- **Q: What did God do?**

Read **Genesis 3:14-15**

- God said to Satan: "Because you have done this, you shall be banned from all the animals and from all the wild creatures."
- This is meant as a reminder to us that:
Nature reveals God, humans reveal God, but demons do not.
- God said: "I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and hers; He will strike at your head, while you strike at his heel."
- **Q: Who's the "He" in this scripture?**
- Answer: The Savior, the Messiah who would rescue us from this Original Sin.
- Read **Genesis 3:22-23**
- **Q: Why wouldn't God want us to have access to the Tree of Life?**
- Answer: God didn't want us to live forever divided from him.
 - Therefore, we were banished from Paradise.
- Death entered the world.

Slide 10:

- **Eventually, God became one of us, born in the flesh like us.**
- Jesus was the "Second Adam".
 - He always listened to his Father God and always obeyed him.
- Because Jesus never sinned, he could take our death upon himself, on the Cross.
- Because Jesus is divine, his divine life conquered death: The resurrection.
- When we choose to accept this sacrifice as something Jesus did for us personally, the death caused by the Original Sin no longer affects us.
 - By choosing to have Christ's life in us, we now have access to the Tree of Life. We can have God's divine life within us and live forever in union with God.
- **Q: Who was the "Second Eve"?**
- Answer: Mary, the Blessed Mother of Jesus.
 - Full of grace, she carried the divine life of God in her womb and in everything she did, saying no to temptation throughout her life.

Slide 11:

- **Q: How does Christ's life get "into" us?**
- Answer: Baptism.
 - Our human life dies (drowns) in the waters of baptism.
 - We receive God's divine life and are resurrected.
- **Q: Can we lose eternal life after being baptized?**
- Answer: Yes, if we divide ourselves from God and his divine life.
 - The remainder of our lives have to be spent staying close to Jesus, imitating him, following him, so that his divine life within us rules us and guides us.
 - **In other words, is Jesus your Savior?**
Yes, always.
 - **Is Jesus your Lord?**
That's up to you!
Is he the Lord of every moment of your day? Of everything you do?
Do you always seek his guidance?
Is there anything you do without him?
Is there anything you do that you wouldn't want Jesus to do with you?

Slide 12:

- Let's pray...

**Yes, Jesus,
I want You to be my Savior *and* the Lord of my life.
Reveal Your Love to me more than I've ever experienced it before.
Penetrate Your Love into every part of my life.
I am sorry for all the times I have divided myself from You.
Please transform me into someone who can fully live
in Your Life and in Your Love.
Thank You, Jesus!
Amen!**