

## Lesson 1

### 1 Thessalonians

#### Question 1

1a. Read St. Paul's first letter to the Thessalonians as if you are hearing/reading his letter as a single, whole composition in itself (which it is). Why is he writing this letter? What are his concerns? (Note, especially, 1Th 2:17-3:5, 4:1,9-13 and 5:11,27.)

1b. Based on what St. Paul says in chapter 2 of this letter (especially 1Th 2:1-13), what can we learn about preaching the Gospel to others and being a disciple of Christ in the world? In other words, what are some of the essential requirements or characteristics of one who evangelizes?

**Readings:** Jn 5:41; Ac 4:13,18-20; Rm 1:8-12; 2Co 3:4-5,12, 5:6-9; Ga 1:8-10; CCC 561-62, 1823, 1832-34, 1840-41.

1c. What does St. Paul mean when he refers to the "shortcomings" or "what is lacking" in the faith of the Thessalonians (1Th 3:10), and how is this point connected to Paul's sending Timothy to Thessalonica (1Th 3:1-13) and also to his writing this letter?

**Readings:** Ph 1:25-26; 2Tm 2:24-26, 3:16-17, 4:1-5; CCC 1829, 1839.

#### Question 2

2a. In his two letters to the Thessalonians, St. Paul frequently speaks of the Lord's "coming" (Greek *parousia*; cf. 1Th 2:19, 3:13, 4:15, 5:23; 2Th 2:1,8,9) as imminent. In fact, it appears that St. Paul thought Christ's Second Coming might occur in his own time (cf. 1Th 4:13-18; 1Co 15:51). Does the fact that Christ's Second Coming seems delayed (in fact, it may not happen for a long time yet) diminish the strength of St. Paul's exhortation to us in chapters 4 and 5?

**Readings:** Ps 76; Mt 24:42-44,48-50; Rm 13:11-14; 1Co 1:7-8, 16:13-14; 1Pt 1:13-17, 5:8; 2Pt 3:4,8-10; Rv 3:2-3, 16:15, 22:20; CCC 673, 1001, 1041, 1049, 2819-20.

2b. In 1Th 4:3, St. Paul summarizes God's will in a few simple words. What *is* God's will for us, and how is His will fulfilled or accomplished in our lives? In other words, do *we* accomplish God's will or does *He* accomplish His will in us? Why aren't all who desire to be holy, holy?

**Readings:** Pss 115, 127; Mt 6:9-10; Jn 17:17-19; Ac 20:32; Rm 6:17-18; 1Co 1:4-9,30-31, 6:11; Ep 1:3-4; 1Th 3:8,12-13, 4:3-8, 5:23-24; 2Th 2:13-17, 3:3; Ja 3:17-18; 1Pt 1:1-2,13-15; 1Jn 3:7-8; CCC 459-60, 519-20, 826, 1709, 1996-2005, 2045, 2813.

## Lesson 2

### 2 Thessalonians

#### Question 1

1a. Read St. Paul's *Second Letter to the Thessalonians* from start to finish as a single composition (as you did with his *First Letter to the Thessalonians* in Lesson 1). In what ways is the second letter similar to or different from the first letter?

The content of important letters usually contains one or more of the following: a warning, a clarification or explanation, a plea or exhortation, advice or instruction, or an answer to a question or concern that is important to the one receiving the letter. How would you summarize the content of St. Paul's *Second Letter to the Thessalonians*?

1b. What subject matter is of paramount concern to the early Christians (cf. 2Th 1:4-12, 2:1-12), and what does St. Paul explain in regard to this? Secondly (II), in light of what St. Paul says in 2Th 3:6-15, what kind of problem has perhaps developed as the Thessalonians are awaiting the *parousia* (the Second Coming of Christ), and what is St. Paul's advice to them?

**Readings:** Mt 24:8-14,21-25; Lk 21:34-36; 1Co 15:22-28; 1Th 4:13-18, 5:1-4; CCC 671, 675, 677, 680-82, 1022, 1041, 1055-56, 2427.

#### Question 2

2a. According to what St. Paul writes in 2Th 2:15 and 3:6b, what was the basis of early Christian knowledge of our faith (i.e., divine revelation concerning salvation)? In other words, according to Scripture itself, how was the Word and will of God revealed, proclaimed and known in the early decades and centuries of Christianity?

**Readings:** Ps 44:1 [NAB 44:2]; Mt 28:19-20; Mk 16:15-16; Lk 10:16; 1Co 11:2, 15:1-4; Col 2:6-7; 1Tm 1:10b-11; 2Tm 2:2, 3:14-15; 1Pt 1:25; 2Pt 3:15-16; CCC 75-84, 98, 113, 120, 171, 857.

2b. How is the concept of being "a model" connected to "the tradition" of the Church (2Th 3:6-9)? Notice that St. Paul tells the Thessalonians to take him as their model (2Th 3:7). Why doesn't he tell them to take Christ as their model? Explain your answer in light of question 2a and the readings below.

**Readings:** Dt 11:18-19; Jt 8:24; 2Mc 6:27-31; Jn 13:15-16; 1Co 4:15-17; Ep 5:1; Ph 2:1-5, 3:17; 1Th 1:4-8; 1Tm 1:15-17, 4:12; 2Tm 1:13-14, 2:8-10, 3:10,14; 1Pt 2:21; CCC (review 76, 83 from 2a) 459, 520, 828, 893-94, 896, 967, 1173, 1695, 2030, 2470, 2472.

## Lesson 3

### Galatians 1 – 3

#### Question 1

1a. Imagine yourself to be a recent convert to the Church (like the Christians in Galatia to whom St. Paul is writing), having recently received the sacraments of initiation (cf. CCC 1212) through the bishop or apostle who writes this letter.

Describe the tone and content of the opening verses of St. Paul's *Letter to the Galatians*. How does his greeting here (Ga 1:1-10) differ from the greetings that usually begin his letters (e.g., the opening 9-12 verses of his letters to the Thessalonians, the Corinthians, the Romans, the Philippians, or the Colossians)?

1b. Following St. Paul's work among the Galatians in bringing them to the Gospel of Jesus Christ, Judaizers (i.e., Jewish converts to Christianity who still observed the Law) undermine Paul's work in Galatia by rejecting his authority as a true apostle.

What are the key points St. Paul makes in arguing a case for himself (Ga 1:11-2:14), and what does he declare in conclusion to his lengthy personal narrative (Ga 2:15-21)? (How is the conclusion connected to all that precedes it in the letter?)

**Readings:** Ac 9:20-30, 15:1-12; 1Co 9:1-2,16-17,19-23; CCC 442, 659.

#### Question 2

In chapter 3 of his *Letter to the Galatians*, St. Paul explains and develops what he has emphatically declared in Ga 2:15-21. What are the basic points he makes in presenting the doctrine of "our justification through faith" (Ga 3:24)?

**Readings:** Gn 12:1-3, 15:1-6; Lv 18:5; Dt 27:26; Ha 2:4; Jn 8:31-36; Ac 3:25-26; Rm 3:21-24, 4:2-3,13-25, 6:11,15-19, 7:7, 11:32; Ep 3:16-21; Ph 3:8-10; Hb 2:2-3, 10:36-39; CCC 294, 617, 654, 762, 1266, 1446, 1733, 1987-1996, 2001, 2008, 2068.

## Lesson 4 Galatians 4 – 6

### Question 1

How do the two examples St. Paul offers in chapter 4 (cf. Ga 4:1-11 and 4:21-31) further explain and demonstrate the main point of his *Letter to the Galatians*, i.e., that we are “justified by faith” (Ga 3:24)?

**Readings:** Gn 11:30, 16:1-16, 17:15-22, 21:1-14; Is 51:1-2, 54:1,5; Rm 9:4-13; Hb 11:11-12; CCC 72, 145-46, 165, 422, 507, 580, 705-06, 757, 1819, 1963, 2619.

### Question 2

How do St. Paul’s words in *Galatians* 5-6 stand against the erroneous Christian concept that “justification by faith” makes void God’s command that we produce good deeds as the ‘work’ of our salvation? How ought our understanding of justification by faith in fact *influence* the way we live and pray (cf., especially, the point St. Paul stresses in Ga 5:6 and 6:9-10)? (What does Jesus Himself both teach and demonstrate to us about good works?)

**Readings:** Gn 17:1-3; Mt 7:19-20, 20:1, 21:28-31a, 24:45-47, 25:40,45; Mk 16:19-20; Jn 4:34, 5:17, 8:39-42b, 9:4, 12:26, 13:35, 17:4, 21:22b; Ep 2:9-10; Hb 13:16; Ja 2:14-26; 1Jn 3:18-19,23-24; Rv 2:19, 3:2, 19:8; CCC 901, 1695, 1972, 2017-18, 2074, 2570, 2592, 2618.

## Lesson 5

### 1 Corinthians: 1 – 4

#### Question 1

1a. Read the first four chapters of St. Paul's *First Letter to the Corinthians*. What is the tone of this letter, and what has prompted Paul to write to the church in Corinth based on what we know from these first chapters? Why does St. Paul say, "I am thankful I did not baptize any of you ... so that no one can say that you were baptized in my name" (1Co 1:14-15)? As "partners" of Jesus Christ (1Co 1:9), shouldn't we want to claim many victories in His Name (cf. 1Co 1:31, 3:22-23)?

**Readings:** Ac 4:11b-12; 2Co 5:20, 6:1,11-13, 10:7; Ga 3:1, 4:19-20; CCC 426-27, 795, 815, 859, 2007-09, 2011.

1b. According to what St. Paul says in chapter 4, what is expected of "stewards entrusted with the mysteries of God" (1Co 4:1), and how might we apply these exhortations to ourselves as members of the Church?

**Readings:** Lk 12:35-48; 2Co 5:9-10, 11:27-30; CCC 428-29, 851.

#### Question 2

2a. Using 1Co 1:17-2:16 and 3:18-20, explain the difference between true wisdom and imperfect wisdom. Is there such a thing as perfect wisdom in this life? Secondly (II), what kinds of people or situations does God use to reveal His power and wisdom (1Co 1:21,26-29)?

**Readings:** Jb 42:1-3; Ps 112; Ws 6:17-20, 7:7-8,15-21,27-30; 9, 13:1-9; Si 1:1-10; Is 29:14; Mt 11:16-19, 12:42, 13:53-54; Lk 21:12-15; Jn 17:3; 1Jn 5:20; Rv 7:10-12; CCC 216, 286-88, 295, 299, 339, 1831, 1950, 1954, 2500.

**Readings (II):** Dt 7:7-9, 8:17-20; Jg 7:2; 1Sm 16:6-7; Mt 11:25; 2Co 4:7-12, 10:10-11, 12:9-10, 13:3-6; Ep 2:7-10; Ja 2:5; CCC 272-73, 526, 2785.

2b. In the metaphors of the farm or field and the building mentioned in 1Co 3:9, who is the planter and who is the builder, and who is the plant and who is the building (1Co 3:5-11,21-23, 4:6,15-17)? Secondly (II), what point is St. Paul trying to make when he speaks of people using different materials for building (1Co 3:12-16)?

**Readings:** Ps 147:1-2; Is 5:1-7, 62:5; Jn 15:1-5; Ep 2:19-22; 1Tm 3:15; CCC 755-56.

**Readings (II):** 1Ch 29:1-5; Ws 6:18-19, 8:17-18; Is 28:16-17a; Mt 3:12; 1Co 6:19-20, 15:48-50; 2Co 6:16-18; 2Tm 2:19-21; 1Pt 2:4-8; 2Pt 3:10; Rv 21:1-2,10-11,18-20; CCC 682, 901.

## Lesson 6

### 1 Corinthians 5 – 6

#### Question 1

Read chapter 5 of St. Paul's *First Letter to the Corinthians*. How does St. Paul advise the Christians to respond to the scandal occurring in the Church in Corinth (1Co 5:2-3,5,9,11,13b), and how can we explain this advice in light of the fact that God wants us to help others reform their lives (1Co 5:10-13)? Explain St. Paul's distinction between grave sin in the Christian community and grave sin encountered in the world (1Co 5:9-13)?

**Readings:** Mt 18:15-18; Jn 8:16; Rm 1:28-32, 16:17-18; 1Co 5:11; 2Co 6:3,16-18; Ep 5:6-17; Col 4:5-6; 1Th 4:9-12; 2Th 3:6,13-15; 1Tm 1:18-20, 3:5,7; 2Tm 2:16-19; Ju 1:22-23; CCC 1451, 1453, 2284, 2287, 2326.

#### Question 2

Review 1Co 6:1-11. What is St. Paul's criticism of the Christians in Corinth, and what do the Corinthians (and many modern-day Christians) fail to understand about wisdom and its judgments (1Co 6:2-3)? How does this reality affect the impact Christians have (or ought to have) in the world?

**Readings:** Dn 5:13-17; Mt 19:28; Lk 12:11-12, 21:14-15; Jn 14:23,25-27; 2Tm 3:14-17; Rv 3:21, 20:4; CCC 1676, 1695, 1794.

#### Question 3

According to what St. Paul says in 1Co 6:12-20, sins of sexual immorality are especially offensive to God and destructive to our being. Why is this so? Secondly (II), what kinds of sins fall into this category (sexual immorality)? Explain why the virtue of chastity is the source, rule and measure of sexual morality and personal integrity.

**Readings:** Gn 2:23-24; Rm 8:9-11; 1Co 3:16-17,23; Ep 4:23-24, 5:1-5,25-27,30-32; Col 3:5-6; 1Th 4:3-8; CCC 364-65, 1004, 2331-36.

**Readings (II):** Mt 15:19; Mk 10:11-12; Rm 13:12-14; Ga 5:19-21; 1Tm 1:10-11; CCC 1809-11, 2337-59, 2380, 2387-91, 2395-96, 2521-24.

## Lesson 7

### 1 Corinthians 7

#### Question 1

Parts of St. Paul's *First Letter to the Corinthians* were written in response to particular questions the Corinthians were struggling with and could not answer for themselves. Read chapter 7. Briefly list or describe the topics St. Paul addresses in this section of his letter. (Does St. Paul say where he gets his answers?)

#### Question 2

The first part of St. Paul's answer is addressed to married couples (1Co 7:1-7). What is his advice to them, and what is the logic behind his answer? In other words, what does Church Tradition hold to be true in regard to conjugal love (the word *conjugal* refers to the love between a husband and wife, i.e., *con-joined* so that the two become one flesh)?

**Readings:** Gn 2:18,23-25, 4:1-2; Ru 4:13-17; Tb 8:4-9; Sg 7:11-14; Ep 5:21-33; CCC 1601, 1611, 1643-45, 2360-64.

#### Question 3

As the gentiles (pagans) converted to Christianity, some of them found themselves in the rather difficult position of being united in marriage to a spouse who opposed or was indifferent to baptism and the Christian life. What is St. Paul's advice to people in these situations (1Co 7:12-17), and what is the logic behind his answer?

**Readings:** Jn 13:34-35, 15:12-15; 1Co 6:19-20; Ep 5:21-33 (repeat from #2); CCC 824, 854, 1637, 1738, 2044, 2104-06, 2472.

#### Question 4

Summarize the key point St. Paul is making in verses 7, 17, 20, and 24-26. How does his advice—including what he says in 1Co 7:18-23—apply to every group he advises in this section of the letter and, therefore, also to us?

**Readings:** Mt 25:14-30; Ep 6:5-9; Col 3:23-25; CCC 825, 872-73, 898-900, 905, 1879, 1936-37, 2013.

**Question 5**

Explain the point St. Paul is making in 1Co 7:29-35. How does his exhortation in 7:29-31 help us understand St. Paul's argument for the celibate life (cf. vv. 8-9, 25, 27-28, 32 and 40)? How might 1Co 7 be viewed as a kernel of the Church's rich tradition regarding consecrated life for the sake of the kingdom of God?

**Readings:** Ps 45; Sg 4:12, 5:1,9-16, 6:3-7, 7:11-14, 8:6-7; Mt 19:10-12; Mk 10:28-31, 12:25; Lk 14:26; CCC 914-33, 945, 1537, 1618-20, 2232, 2348-50.



## Lesson 8

### 1 Corinthians 8 – 10

#### Question 1

In chapters 8-10 of *The First Letter to the Corinthians*, St. Paul continues to respond to a number of questions posed to him by the early Christians—specifically, the people in Corinth—who have concerns and disagreements about eating the food of gentiles. What does St. Paul advise (1Co 8 and 10:14-33)? What is the spiritual reasoning behind his teaching, and what are we supposed to learn from this?

**Readings:** Mk 7:17-20; Ac 10:13-16,27-28,34-35,44-48; Rm 14:1-4,13-23,15:1-3a; 1Co 13:4-5; Ph 2:3-5; Col 2:20-23; Hb 13:9; 1Pt 4:8-9; CCC 1789, 1827-28, 2015.

#### Question 2

In chapter 9, St. Paul invokes his own example to further explain the freedom and demands contained in the law of the Gospel. Using St. Paul's argument, explain this blend of freedom and obligation for those who live the law of Christ. How can we figure out what is best in every situation in life, especially when there is no hard-and-fast rule about many of the choices we make everyday? How does St. Paul's analogy in 1Co 9:24-27 illustrate the point he is making?

**Readings:** Ws 1:1-5; Mt 20:26-28; Lk 12:22-23; Rm 14:6-9; 1Co 4:11-14; 2Co 11:7,27,30; Ga 5:16-18; 2Tm 2:5,7; CCC 1788, 1806, 1810-11, 1835, 1939, 1972-74, 1985.

#### Question 3

3a. Warning Christians to be careful and disciplined in their actions lest they be “disqualified” from the race (1Co 9:27), St. Paul goes on to illustrate this point through the lessons Israel had to learn down through salvation history. According to what St. Paul says in 1Co 10:1-22, what lessons are we meant to learn from Israel's history, lessons which apply to us here and now?

**Readings:** Dt 8:11-16; Ps 95; Rm 15:4; 2Co 6:16-18; 2Tm 3:14-17; CCC 122.

3b. What is God revealing to us in 1Co 10:13, and do Christians always give clear witness of this truth to the world by their attitudes and reactions to struggles and crises? How so or how not? Is there anything wise or good in God allowing us to be tested or tempted? Explain your answer.

**Readings:** Gn 22:1-2,11-14; Ex 16:4; Nb 11:1,4-7,10; Dt 8:14-16, 13:2-4; 2Ch 32:30-31; Jt 8:11-12,25-27; Jb 1:8-12; Si 15:16-20; Jr 17:10; Mt 4:1; Ac 14:21-22; Rm 5:3-5; 1Th 3:5; 1Tm 6:9; Hb 2:18; Ja 1:13-15; 1Pt 1:6-8; Rv 2:10-11; CCC 2847-48, 2863.

## Lesson 9

### 1 Corinthians 11

#### Question 1

In 1Co 11:2-16, what does St. Paul say regarding what is proper to men and women when they pray or prophesy, and what is his explanation (the underlying principle) for this rule? Following Vatican II, the Church revised the liturgical discipline embodying the principle of which St. Paul speaks. How might we explain the reason for this change?

**Readings:** Gn 1:27, 2:22-23, 3:7-11, 24:63-67; Ex 24:16-18, 33:18-23; Lv 13:40; 2Sm 15:25-26,29-30; Ne 9:1-3; Es 4:17k (NAB C13; RSV 14:1-2); Jb 1:20-21; Sg 4:1, 7:6; Is 3:16-24, 46:4; Mi 1:16; Mt 5:36-37; Lk 7:38,47, 12:7; Jn 12:1-3, 20:6-7; 2Co 3:18; Ep 5:21-24; Col 1:17-18; 1Pt 3:3-6; CCC 83, 369, 792, 1202, 1204-07, 2651.

#### Question 2

What problem does St. Paul address in 1Co 11:17-34, and what lessons are we to learn from his solemn warnings to the Corinthians concerning the Eucharist? Why is the Corinthian scandal described in 1Co 11:17-22 especially offensive given its context within the Eucharist?

**Readings:** 1Sm 5:6-12; Mt 8:8,10, 25:44-46; Jn 13:34-35; Ep 4:1-4; Col 3:12-17; 1Tm 5:8; Hb 12:28-29; 1Jn 3:17-18; CCC 775, 950, 1105, 1107-09, 1119, 1134, 1140, 1325, 1329, 1348, 1355, 1374, 1385-86, 1396-98, 1415, 1457.

## Lesson 10

### 1 Corinthians 12 – 14

#### Question 1

1a. List the gifts or *charisms* of the Spirit (from Greek *charismata* meaning graces, favors or gifts) which St. Paul specifically names in 1Co 12:8-11. Is there evidence for the presence of charisms in the early Church, and if so, what seems to be the purpose of these graces?

**Readings:** Mt 17:20; Ac 2:4, 3:6-8, 4:21-22, 5:12-16, 8:30-36, 9:32-35, 10:44-48, 13:6-12, 16:6, 19:1-7,11-12, 26:26-27, 27:9-10,21-22,33-38; Hb 2:1-4; 1Jn 4:1-3; CCC 768, 798-801, 809-10, 951, 1508, 2003.

1b. Briefly explain the analogy St. Paul uses in 1Co 12:12-26 concerning the gifts of the Church. (Are charisms essential to our salvation?) Name, in their proper order, those God has “appointed in the Church” or “set in place” at the service of its members (1Co 12:28-31). What is St. Paul’s concluding statement to this section on the spiritual gifts (1Co 12:31)?

**Readings:** Rm 12:3-5; Ep 4:7-8,11-13,15-16; CCC 340, 752, 791, 814, 952-53, 1937.

1c. Try summarizing chapter 13 in one sentence, then explain why this chapter is the central point of this whole section (1Co 12-14) devoted to the spiritual gifts of the Church.

**Readings:** Mt 7:12,21-23;; Mk 12:28-31; Rm 13:8-10; Ga 5:13-14; Col 2:18-19; 1Jn 4:7-8,16; CCC 733, 735, 824, 826, 1822-24, 1826, 1889, 2196, 2822.

1d. What key point(s) does St. Paul make in chapter 14 regarding prophecy in relation to the gift of tongues? Secondly (II), using the readings provided below, describe the kind of prophecies a New Testament prophet might announce (or don’t we have prophets anymore?).

**Readings:** Nb 11:26-29; Ac 2:1-4,17-18, 10:44-48, 19:6, 21:7-11; Rm 1:9, 12:6-8; 1Th 5:19-21; 1Tm 4:14; Rv 11:3-4; CCC 2004.

**Readings (II):** Jn 1:19-23, 16:13; Ac 2:38-41, 3:22-26, 7:37-40; 2Tm 3:16-17; 1Pt 1:10-12; 2Pt 1:19-21; Rv 2:26-29; CCC 64, 243, 522, 785, 1964, 2584, 2595.

## Lesson 11

### 1 Corinthians 15 – 16

#### Question 1

1a. How does St. Paul respond in 1Co 15:1-34 to the fact that some of the Corinthians do not believe (or are certain) that the dead will be raised up, soul and body, to new life? What arguments does St. Paul present for the resurrection, and how important is it that Christians embrace this particular doctrine of our faith?

**Readings:** Gn 2:7; 2Mc 7:9,14,29, 12:44-45; Ps 139:13-16; Dn 12:1-4,13; Mt 24:31, 28:6,16-17; Mk 16:9-14; Lk 24:15,21-24,33-46; Jn 10:17-18, 12:23-25,31-32, 20:17-29, 21:9-14; Ac 4:33, 10:39-43; Rm 4:19-25, 6:4, 8:10-11, 10:5-13; Ep 2:4-6; Col 2:12-13; 1Th 4:13-14; CCC 274, 638-58, 988-89, 991-96, 1002-04, 1227.

1b. After addressing the fact of the resurrection itself, St. Paul goes on to describe to the Corinthians the mystery of being raised up to eternal life. Although the risen body is a reality not accessible to us through natural knowledge, how does St. Paul nevertheless use natural imagery to explain this mystery (1Co 15:35-58)?

**Readings:** Gn 6:3; Ps 30; Ws 9:13-16; Is 40:6-8; Ez 37:1-14; Jn 3:9-16, 6:54, 11:21-27,37-44; Ac 13:30-41; 2Co 4:10-14, 5:1-5; Ph 3:20-21; Col 3:1-3; 1Jn 3:2; Rv 20:13-15, 21:1-4; CCC 364, 660, 990, 997-1001, 1006, 1015-18, 1405, 2796.

1c. Conclusions to lengthy letters, like their introductions, mention important information, even though briefly presented. What concerns does St. Paul mention in chapter 16, the conclusion to his *First Letter to the Corinthians*? In what ways might we say that the closing verses are very “apostolic” in both tone and content, i.e., the kinds of things an apostle might say?

## Lesson 12

### 2 Corinthians 1 – 2

#### Question 1

1a. The words *encouragement*, *consolation*, *comfort*, *exhortation* (also *urge* or *beseech*) are rooted in Greek *paraklesis*, a word (or form of this word) which St. Paul uses twenty-one times in chapters 1-7. From this Greek word comes one of the titles of the Holy Spirit, the “Paraclete.” What kind of “encouragement” is God giving His people through the Word we encounter in 2Co 1:3-7 and 7:2-7, given the fact that there have been misunderstandings, disobedience, severe reprimands and hurt feelings in recent months?

**Readings:** Dt 3:28; 2Ch 16:8-9; 1Mc 12:50-51; 2Mc 13:12-17, 15:17; Ps 27; Ba 4:30; Jn 14:16-18,25-26, 16:7-14; Ac 14:22, 15:30-35, 20:1-2; Rm 1:11-12; Ph 1:9-11; Col 1:24-25,28-29, 2:1-5; 1Th 2:11-12, 3:1-3; Ti 1:9; Hb 12:5-7; CCC 692.

1b. What can we learn from St. Paul’s words in 2Co 1:12-22 about changing his course of action? Should a Christian change his mind after he decides to do something, especially since we know that God never changes His mind and that faithfulness is a fruit of the Holy Spirit at work in us? Explain your answer.

**Readings:** Nb 23:19; Pss 77:10-12 [NAB: 77:11-13], 117; Ec 3:6; Si 5:9-10 [NAB: 5:11-12]; Mt 1:19-20,24, 2:12; Ac 16:6-10, 20:3, 22:17-21, 23:11; Rm 1:13, 7:6; 1Co 15:58; 2Co 12:18, 13:8; Ep 1:9-11; 1Tm 6:11b; Hb 6:16-20; CCC 1062, 1065, 1296, 2093, 2153, 2465-66, 2468-69.

1c. What reason does St. Paul give for writing his previous letter to the Corinthians (2Co 2:9), and what can we learn from this statement about how we should respond to apostolic Tradition as divine revelation? (Remember that at the time this statement is made, St. Paul’s letters are still part of apostolic tradition, the New Testament not yet having been formed.)

**Readings:** Ex 15:23-27; 1Sm 15:22-23a; 1Ch 29:17-20; Ps 17:3-5, 119:9-16; Ws 6:9-11; Jn 5:37-40, 8:31-32, 12:39-40,44-45; 2Co 13:10; CCC 77-78, 84, 171, 176, 181-85, 857.

**Question 2**

What is the “fragrance of Christ” about which St. Paul speaks in 2Co 2:14-17? How is it present in the world, and what are its effects?

**Readings:** Gn 27:26-29; Ex 30:6-7,22-37; Lv 16:12-13; 2Ch 2:2-3; Ps 45:6-8 [NAB: 45:8-9]; Sg 1:12-14, 2:12-13, 4:10-11, 7:14; Si 24:15; Ba 5:7-9; Ho 14:7; Jn 12:3; 1Co 1:18; Ep 5:1-2; Ph 4:18; CCC 436, 695, 1150, 1152, 1241, 1289, 1294, 1297.

## Lesson 13

### 2 Corinthians 3 – 7

#### Question 1

It was customary in St. Paul's time for teachers and preachers who traveled from city to city to carry "letters of commendation" (2Co 3:1) with them to present to the communities. Does St. Paul possess any such letters (2Co 3:1-6, 5:11-12)? Explain your answer. Secondly (II), in what way does St. Paul contrast the Word of the Old Testament with that of the New (2Co 3:6-4:6)? Does the New Testament of Jesus Christ so outstrip the Old Testament as to make it virtually useless to us?

**Readings:** Ex 32:15-16; Ez 36:26-28; Jn 3:27-28, 5:31-32, 8:18; 1Co 9:1-3; 2Co 10:12-18, 11:4; Ep 3:7.

**Readings (II):** Ex 31:18, 34:29-35; Dt 30:1-5, 11-12; Js 8:34-35; 2Sm 23:1-5; 1Ch 16:12-18; Ps 119:89-96; Is 40:8; Jn 1:1-2, 10-14, 5:39; Rm 1:16-17, 2:29, 3:1-2, 10:2-17, 11:7-10; Ep 2:13-14, 18; Hb 8:6-13; 1Pt 1:23-25; CCC 121, 140, 700, 702, 1081-82, 1093-94, 2054, 2056, 2076-78, 2082.

#### Question 2

2a. Explain the *tent* image St. Paul uses in 2Co 5:1-10. What kinds of things does God reveal to us through the image of *tent* in salvation history?

**Readings:** Gn 25:27; Ex 27:20-21, 29:43-46, 33:7-11; Nb 16:25-27a; Js 3:14-17, 22:4-6; 2Sm 7:1-6, 12-13; Pss 19:1-6, 78:54-55, 104:1-6, 106:24-25; Ws 9:14-15, 11:2-3; Is 38:11-12; Jr 30:18-22; Ho 12:10-11; Zc 12:7-8; Ac 7:44-50, 18:1-3; Rm 8:23; 1Co 15:42-53; Ph 3:20-21; Col 3:1-4; Hb 8:1-2, 11:9-10, 13:14; 2Pt 1:12-15; Rv 15:5-8; CCC 990, 1016-17, 1420-21, 2796.

2b. Who or what is the "new creation" (2Co 5:17), and why is this reality a paradox (i.e., seemingly a contradiction) based on all that St. Paul says in this section of his letter (2Co 5:4-6)?

**Readings:** 1Mc 4:48-51; Is 43:19-21; Jr 31:22; Mk 2:22; Jn 3:5-7; Rm 6:3-4; 1Co 6:19; Ga 6:14-16; Ep 2:4-6, 4:23-24; Col 3:10; 1Pt 1:3-5; 2Pt 3:13; Rv 21:1-5; CCC 315, 374, 460, 654, 1214-15, 1265-66, 1988, 1999.



## Lesson 14

### 2 Corinthians 8 – 9

In chapters 8 and 9, St. Paul speaks about a collection he had eagerly taken up on behalf of the poor of the Church, particularly those in Jerusalem (cf. Ga 2:10). Each Church was invited and also encouraged to contribute to this general collection, which St. Paul personally helped transport back to Jerusalem (cf. Rm 15:25).

#### Question 1

1a. Read 2Co 8:1-9:5. Describe how the churches in Macedonia (northern Greece, where Thessalonica and Philippi are located) and Achaia (southern Greece, where Corinth is located) have responded to the collection. What seems to be the problem in Corinth and what is St. Paul advising them to do, given their current struggles (cf. 2Co 8:10-15)? Why are the churches in Macedonia and Achaia—who are each experiencing their own kinds of poverty and hardship—obligated to help those who live so far from them and whom they scarcely know?

**Readings:** Lv 14:21-22; Dt 15:7-11; 1Sm 2:6-8; 2Kg 24:14, 25:12; Tb 2:1-2, 4:5-11; Pss 41, 133; Prv 14:31, 19:17, 28:27; Si 3:30-4:10; Is 58:7-9a; Mt 25:45; Mk 10:20-22, 12:41-44, 14:3-9; Lk 6:20, 19:8-10; Jn 12:4-6; Ac 11:27-30, 20:35, 24:17; Rm 15:25-27; 1Co 16:1-2; 2Co 6:10; Ga 2:9-10, 6:6-10; 1Tm 6:17-19; Rv 3:17-18; CCC 1397, 1969, 2402, 2443-49, 2462-63, 2833.

1b. What important truths does St. Paul explain in 2Co 9:6-15 regarding God's providence towards us and our response to that providence, even when it seems we have little to offer? Secondly (II), what seems to be the supreme fruit of generosity (2Co 9:11-15), and how is the Eucharistic liturgy the perfect expression of this reality?

**Readings:** Prv 11:24-25; Ws 14:2-5; Si 7:32; Is 25:1,4; Lk 6:38, 10:25-28; Jn 13:34-35; 1Co 13:3; Hb 13:14-16; Ja 2:5,22-24.

**Readings (II):** CCC 224, 1070, 1083, 1328, 1351-52, 1360-61, 2637-38.

## Lesson 15

### 2 Corinthians 10 – 13

The final section of St. Paul's *Second Letter to the Corinthians*, chapters 10-13, reveals a shift in tone and subject matter from the rest of the letter. St. Paul is clearly responding to accusations made against him by other contemporary teachers who, while showing persuasive "letters of commendation" that boast of their credentials (cf. 2Co 3:10, 10:12), are undermining the message proclaimed by Paul throughout Achaia (cf. 2Co 1:1, 9:2, 11:10).

#### Question 1

1a. Why does St. Paul admit that he is "jealous" when it comes to the Corinthians and their loyalty to those who teach them (2Co 11:1-6)? Is "jealousy" acceptable in an apostle of Christ? Explain your answer in light of the following readings.

**Readings:** Ex 20:5, 34:14-16; Nb 25:10-13; Dt 4:23-24, 5:8-10, 6:14-19, 29:17-19; Js 24:19-24; 1Kg 19:9-10; 2Kg 10:15-17; Jt 9:1,12-14; 1Mc 2:49-50,54,58; Ps 119:81-88,113-120,137-44; Prv 19:2; Si 45:23; Is 9:5-6, 37:31-32, 59:16-17; Ez 36:1-8, 39:25-29; Zc 8:1-8; Jn 2:17; 1Co 10:21-22; Ph 1:7-11; CCC 399, 584, 2083, 2086, 2133-34.

1b. Why does St. Paul say that the Corinthians owe him more loyalty than they owe others who have taught them (cf. 2Co 11:7-15, 12:11-15)? Secondly (II), explain how St. Paul 'makes a fool of himself' in the argument he presents (2Co 11:16-12:4,11). How does he conclude his boast (2Co 12:5-10)?

**Readings:** Rm 1:1-6, 13:8; 3Jn 1:7; CCC 1899, 2087, 2216, 2220.

**Readings (II):** Ex 32:15-20; Nb 14:10-19; 1Mc 14:35-37; 1Co 4:7-10, 9:18-23; Ep 2:8; Ph 2:1-2; Col 2:1-5; CCC 65, 425.