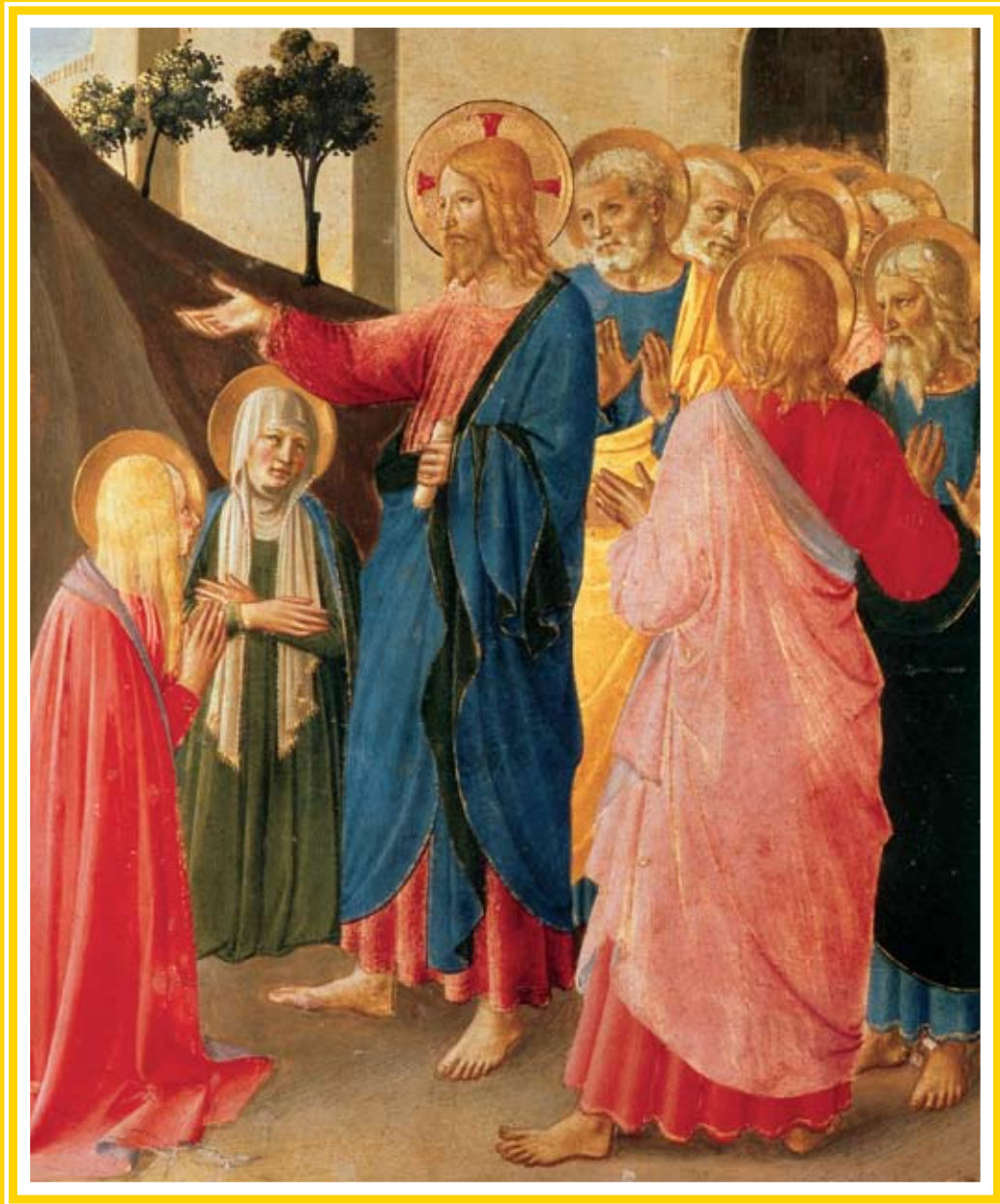


OUR LIFE WITH JESUS



Faith and Life Series

3

Third Edition

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3 Learning about God

“This is eternal life, that they know you the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent.”

John 17:3

We believe God is with us because He gives us many signs of His presence. One of the best signs is the world all around us. Everything in nature acts for a purpose. It has order, and it has great beauty. Even a person who has never heard about God can figure out that Someone very wise and powerful must have put nature together. The different parts of creation give us many clues about God, our **Creator**.

Mountains and vast forests reveal that our Creator is majestic and great. Oceans and rushing waterfalls tell us of His power. Fresh roses and sunsets reflect God’s beauty. The growth and seasons of living things show us that God is wise. And the company of good, loving people teaches us more about God’s own goodness and love.

God made sure we had many ways to discover Him, since He created us to know and love Him. Long ago, before the coming of Jesus, God sent messages to His people through holy men called prophets. **Prophets** were men who prepared the people for the coming of the Savior. Moses, for example, was a great prophet. Through Moses, and other Old Testament prophets, God taught mankind to be good, to stop sinning, and to trust in Him.

God later revealed Himself to us more directly through Jesus Christ, His Son, our Savior. Remember, Jesus is God the Son, the Second Person of the Trinity. His way of life on earth showed us what God is really like. We learn through Jesus that God is gentle as well as just, slow to anger, rich in mercy, and full of love. We learn that He



forgives the greatest sins if we are sorry for them. We learn that He is always ready to heal us, help us, and be our friend.

Jesus often taught these things through parables. **Parables** are stories about ordinary people that teach us something about the Kingdom of God. Each parable is different, but they all teach one clear message from God: “Love God with all your heart and soul and might, and love your neighbor as yourself.”

We find Jesus’ parables and other things He said and did in a big book called the Bible. The **Bible** is the holy book God gave us. It has two parts, the Old Testament and the New Testament. The **Old Testament** is the first part of the Bible. It teaches us about creation, our first parents, and the long wait and preparation of God’s people for the Savior. The **New Testament** is the second part of the Bible. It tells the story of Jesus and how the Church began. It teaches us that the Church is our ladder to Heaven.

God inspired holy men from earliest times to write down His Law and teachings. These are recorded in the Bible. That is why we call it the Word of God. We also call it Scripture. God’s teaching was also passed on through words and deeds that weren’t written in the Bible. That teaching is called Tradition. Scripture and Tradition teach us everything we need to know to live a good and happy life that is pleasing to God.

Jesus, our Teacher, once called Himself the Good Shepherd because He watches over us and leads us to the Father. After Jesus left the earth, He gave us another shepherd to take His place. We call this shepherd the Vicar of Christ or the **Pope**. The Pope teaches and guides the Church for Christ. He encourages us to become saints. He is the head of the **bishops** all over the world. He helps them in their mission to help us keep learning and growing in our Faith.

Words to Know:

Creator prophet parable Bible
Old Testament New Testament Pope bishop

- Q. 16** *Can we know about God from the world around us?*
Yes, we can know about God from the world around us. God's goodness, wisdom, power, and beauty can be seen in His creation (CCC 34).
- Q. 17** *Does creation reveal all we need to know about God?*
No, creation cannot reveal all we need to know about God, so God chose to reveal Himself through prophets and, later, through His own Son, Jesus Christ (CCC 35, 50, 65).
- Q. 18** *How could Jesus reveal God to us?*
Jesus could reveal God to us because Jesus is God the Son. He taught us about God through His life, actions, and words (CCC 65, 2763).
- Q. 19** *Does the Bible contain all we need to know about God and His plan for men?*
No, the Bible does not contain all we need to know of God's Word, but Scripture and Tradition as taught by the Church show us everything we need to know about God (CCC 67, 78, 80).

Q. 20 *How can we be sure that the Church teaches us the truth about God and His plan?*

We can be sure that the Church teaches us the truth because Jesus founded the Church and established Peter as the first Pope. Since then, all Popes and bishops are helped by God to guide and teach all people the truths of God (CCC 85–86).

