Little children, it is the last hour; and as you have heard that the Antichrist is coming, even now many antichrists have come, by which we know that it is the last hour. . . Who is a liar but he who denies that Jesus is the Christ? He is antichrist who denies the Father and Son. (1 John 2:18, 22)

And every spirit that does not confess that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God. And this is the spirit of Antichrist, which you have heard is coming, and is now already in the world. (1 John 4:3)

For many deceivers have gone out into the world who do not confess Jesus Christ is come in the flesh. This is a deceiver and an antichrist. (2 John 7)

Bio for Father John Paul Echert

Father John Paul Echert is priest of the Archdiocese of St. Paul – Minneapolis and pastor of Holy Trinity Parish, serving the two churches of Holy Trinity and St. Augustine in South St. Paul. Prior to his current pastorate Father was a Professor of Sacred Scripture at the University of St. Thomas and The Saint Paul Seminary, specializing in New Testament studies. He holds a License in Sacred Scripture from the Pontifical Biblical Institute, Rome, with additional graduate studies at the Ecole Biblique, Jerusalem. Father Echert is the Scripture Expert for EWTN online and a frequent radio guest on Catholic Spirit Radio, Omaha. He writes a monthly column on Scriptural topics for The Catholic Servant and teaches in various diocesan programs for deacon candidates and adult enrichment. He served as a Catholic Chaplain in the United States Air Force and Air National Guard for nearly thirty years.

Prayer of St. Thomas Aquinas

Grant, O merciful God, that I may ardently desire, prudently examine, truthfully acknowledge, and perfectly accomplish what is pleasing to Thee, for the praise and glory of Thy Name. Amen.

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To that end, we provide the following small group guidelines:

1. **Please arrive on time, and come prepared**
   - Begin your homework with prayer, asking for the guidance of the Holy Spirit.
   - Spread out your homework over the week; you will get more out of it and enjoy it more.
   - If you cannot attend a class, please call, email or text me.

2. **Actively take part in the discussion with charity**
   - Everyone’s insights are valuable to others and vital for the group’s growth.
   - Please participate each week.
   - If you like to share, think ahead to the 2 or 3 times you would like to comment, so as not to dominate the discussion. Allow quiet time for others to speak before adding comments.
   - If you find it hard to share, think ahead to the 1 or 2 times you would like to comment, so you are comfortable participating.

3. **Be a good listener and respectful of others**
   - Please give your full attention to the person speaking, and do not interrupt others
   - Please avoid side conversations in the small group discussions and lecture.

4. **Stick to the assigned study material; do not bring other materials to the small group**
   - In order to gain the most out of this study, please stay focused on insights gleaned from your assigned homework.
   - Please do not get sidetracked on other matters—such as former churches or bible studies, movies you have seen, or books you have read.
   - Bring only your homework, Bible and Catechism to class.
   - Please do not bring materials to share with the group—such as other bible study materials, articles, books, tapes or other handouts.

5. **Small group discussions are confidential**
   - Please do not discuss them outside the small group.

6. **Pray for your small group members**

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**“Therefore encourage one another and build one another up, just as you are doing.” (1 Thess. 5:11)**

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**Small Group Guidelines**

Small groups are an opportunity to create deep and lasting faith-filled relationships, with people who will share times of joy in your life, and encourage and help you in times of difficulty.

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**Appendix (cont.)**

call, and with the sound of the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first; 17 then we who are alive, who are left, shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air; and so we shall always be with the Lord. 18 Therefore comfort one another with these words.

(1 Thessalonians 4)

But as to the times and the seasons, brethren, you have no need to have anything written to you. 2 For you yourselves know well that the day of the Lord will come like a thief in the night. 3 When people say, “There is peace and security,” then sudden destruction will come upon them as travail comes upon a woman with child, and there will be no escape. 4 But you are not in darkness, brethren, for that day to surprise you like a thief. 5 For you are all sons of light and sons of the day; we are not of the night or of darkness. 6 So then let us not sleep, as others do, but let us keep awake and be sober. 7 For those who sleep at night, and those who get drunk are drunk at night. 8 But, since we belong to the day, let us be sober, and put on the breastplate of faith and love, and for a helmet the hope of salvation. 9 For God has not destined us for wrath, but to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, 10 who died for us so that whether we wake or sleep we may live with him. 11 Therefore encourage one another and build one another up, just as you are doing.

(1 Thessalonians 5)

This is evidence of the righteous judgment of God, that you may be made worthy of the kingdom of God, for which you are suffering—since indeed God deems it just to repay with affliction those who afflict you, 7 and to grant rest with us to you who are afflicted, when the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven with his mighty angels in flaming fire, 8 inflicting vengeance upon those who do not know God and upon those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus. 9 They shall suffer the punishment of eternal destruction and exclusion from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of his might, 10 when he comes on that day to be glorified in his saints, and to be marveled at in all who have believed, because our testimony to you was believed. 11 To this end we always pray for you, that our God may make you worthy of his call, and may fulfill every good resolve and work of faith by his power, 12 so that the name of our Lord Jesus may be glorified in you, and you in him, according to the grace of our God and the Lord Jesus Christ.

(2 Thessalonians 1)

Now concerning the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and our assembling to meet him, we beg you, brethren, 2 not to be quickly shaken in mind or excited, either by spirit or by word, or by letter purporting to be from us, to the effect that the day of the Lord has come. 3 Let no one deceive you in any way; for that day will not come, unless the rebellion comes first, and the man of lawless[ness] is revealed, the son of perdition, 4 who opposes and exalts himself against every so-called god or object of worship, so that he takes his seat in the temple of God, proclaiming himself to be God. 5 Do you not remember that when I was still with you I told you this? 6 And you know what is restraining him now so that he may be revealed in his time. 7 For the mystery of lawlessness is already at work; only he who now restrains it will do so until he is out of the way. 8 And then the lawless one will be revealed, and the Lord Jesus will slay him with the breath of his mouth and destroy him by his appearing and his coming. 9 The coming of the lawless one by the activity of Satan will be with all power and with pretended signs and wonders, 10 and with all wicked deception for those who are to perish, because they refused to love the truth and so be saved. 11 Therefore God sends upon them a strong delusion, to make them believe what is false, 12 so that all may be condemned who did not believe the truth but had pleasure in unrighteousness.

(2 Thessalonians 2)
Appendix: The Parousia, the Rapture, the Anti-Christ

Then I looked, and lo, a white cloud, and seated on the cloud one like a son of man, with a golden crown on his head, and a sharp sickle in his hand. And another angel came out of the temple, calling with a loud voice to him who sat upon the cloud, “Put in your sickle, and reap, for the hour to reap has come, for the harvest of the earth is fully ripe.” So he who sat upon the cloud swung his sickle on the earth, and the earth was reaped.

And another angel came out of the temple in heaven, and he too had a sharp sickle. Then another angel came out from the altar, the angel who has power over fire, and he called with a loud voice to him who had the sharp sickle, “Put in your sickle, and gather the clusters of the vine of the earth, for its grapes are ripe.” So the angel swung his sickle on the earth and gathered the vintage of the earth, and threw it into the great wine press of the wrath of God, and the wine press was trodden outside the city, and blood flowed from the wine press, as high as a horse’s bridle, for one thousand six hundred stadia. (Revelation 14)

Amen, I say to you, this generation will not pass away till all these things take place. Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away. “But of that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, nor the Son, but the Father only. As were the days of Noah, so will be the coming of the Son of man. For as in those days before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day when Noah entered the ark, and they did not know until the flood came and swept them all away, so will be the coming of the Son of man. Then two men will be in the field; one is taken and one is left. Two women will be grinding at the mill; one is taken and one is left. Watch therefore, for you do not know on what day your Lord is coming. But know this, that if the householder had known in what part of the night the thief was coming, he would have watched and would not let his house be broken into. Therefore you also must be ready; for the Son of man is coming at an hour you do not expect. (Matthew 24)

I tell you, on that night two people will be in one bed; one will be taken and the other left. Two women will be grinding grain together; one will be taken and the other left.” Where, Lord?” they asked. He replied, “Where there is a dead body, there the vultures will gather.” (Luke 17)

Listen, I tell you a mystery: We will not all sleep, but we will all be changed—in a flash, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, the dead will be raised imperishable and we will be changed. For the perishable must clothe itself with the imperishable, and mortal with immortality. (1 Cor 15)

For the Lord himself will come down from heaven, with a loud command, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet call of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first. After that, we who are still alive and are left will be raptured up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And so we will be with the Lord forever. Therefore encourage one another with these words. (1 Thessalonians 4)

But we would not have you ignorant, brethren, concerning those who are asleep, that you may not grieve as others do who have no hope. For since we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so, through Jesus, God will bring with him those who have fallen asleep. For this we declare to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive, who are left until the coming of the Lord, shall not precede those who have fallen asleep. For the Lord himself will descend from heaven with a cry of command, with the archangel’s
SESSION I

ANCIENT APOCALYPSE

Judgment of the Damned

11 Then I saw a great white throne and him who sat upon it; from his presence earth and sky fled away, and no place was found for them. 12 And I saw the dead, great and small, standing before the throne, and books were opened. Also another book was opened, which is the book of life. And the dead were judged by what was written in the books, by what they had done. 13 And the sea gave up the dead in it, Death and Hades gave up the dead in them, and all were judged by what they had done. 14 Then Death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. This is the second death, the lake of fire; 15 and if any one's name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire. (Rev 20)

New Jerusalem

22 And I saw no temple in the city, for its temple is the Lord God the Almighty and the Lamb. 23 And the city has no need of sun or moon to shine upon it, for the glory of God is its light, and its lamp is the Lamb. 24 By its light shall the nations walk; and the kings of the earth shall bring their glory into it, 25 and its gates shall never be shut by day—and there shall be no night there; 26 they shall bring into it the glory and the honor of the nations. 27 But nothing unclean shall enter it, nor anyone who practices abomination or falsehood, but only those who are written in the Lamb's book of life. (Rev 21)

Heavenly Paradise

Then he showed me the river of the water of life, bright as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb 2 through the middle of the street of the city; also, on either side of the river, the tree of life[a] with its twelve kinds of fruit, yielding its fruit each month; and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations. 3 There shall no more be anything accursed, but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it, and his servants shall worship him; 4 they shall see his face, and his name shall be on their foreheads. 5 And night shall be no more; they need no light of lamp or sun, for the Lord God will be their light, and they shall reign for ever and ever. (Rev 22)

Discussion Questions

v Describe the significance of the Woman Clothed with the Sun who gives birth to a Son. The dragon attempts to devour the Son but the Son is rescued. Who are the Offspring of the Woman next attacked by the dragon?

v Identify the symbolism of each of these figures: the dragon, the beast from the sea, the beast from the land. What is the significance of the fact that they are three in number and what are they the complete antithesis of?

v Many non-Catholics believe that there will be a 1,000 year physical reign of Christ here on earth but that view has been condemned by the Church. Explain how many Jews of the time of Jesus made a similar mistake.


Rider on a White Horse

11 Then I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse! He who sat upon it is called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he judges and makes war. 12 His eyes are like a flame of fire, and on his head are many diadems; and he has a name inscribed which no one knows but himself. 13 He is clad in a robe dipped in[b] blood, and the name by which he is called is The Word of God. 14 And the armies of heaven, arrayed in fine linen, white and pure, followed him on white horses. 15 From his mouth issues a sharp sword with which to smite the nations, and he will rule them with a rod of iron; he will tread the wine press of the fury of the wrath of God the Almighty. 16 On his robe and on his thigh he has a name inscribed, King of kings and Lord of lords.

The Beast and the Armies Defeated

17 Then I saw an angel standing in the sun, and with a loud voice he called to all the birds that fly in midheaven, “Come, gather for the great supper of God, 18 to eat the flesh of kings, the flesh of captains, the flesh of mighty men, the flesh of horses and their riders, and the flesh of all men, both free and slave, both small and great.” 19 And I saw the beast and the kings of the earth with their armies gathered to make war against him who sits upon the horse and against his army. 20 And the beast was captured, and with it the false prophet who in its presence had worked the signs by which he deceived those who had received the mark of the beast and those who worshiped its image. These two were thrown alive into the lake of fire that burns with sulphur. 21 And the rest were slain by the sword of him who sits upon the horse, the sword that issues from his mouth; and all the birds were gorged with their flesh.

The Millennium

Then I saw an angel coming down from heaven, holding in his hand the key of the bottomless pit and a great chain. 2 And he seized the dragon, that ancient serpent, who is the Devil and Satan, and bound him for a thousand years, 3 and threw him into the pit, and shut it and sealed it over him, that he should deceive the nations no more, till the thousand years were ended. After that he must be loosed for a little while. Then I saw thrones, and seated on them were those to whom judgment was committed. Also I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded for their testimony to Jesus and for the word of God, and who had not worshiped the beast or its image and had not received its mark on their foreheads or their hands. They came to life, and reigned with Christ a thousand years. 5 The rest of the dead were not yet alive, for the great resurrection had not yet come; but the earth and the sea were left in their place, 6 and they came to life, and reigned with Christ a thousand years. 7 The rest of the dead did not come to life until the thousand years were ended. This is the first resurrection. 8 Blessed and holy is he who shares in the first resurrection! Over such the second death has no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and they shall reign with him a thousand years. And when the thousand years are ended, Satan will be loosed from his prison 9 and will come out to deceive the nations which are at the four corners of the earth, that is, Gog and Magog, to gather them for battle; their number is like the sand of the sea. 10 And they marched up over the broad earth and surrounded the camp of the saints and the beloved city; but fire came down from heaven[a] and consumed them, 11 and the devil who had deceived them was thrown into the lake of fire and sulphur where the beast and the false prophet were, and they will be tormented day and night for ever and ever. (Revelation 20)

World Wide Deluge Apocalypse

When men began to multiply on the face of the ground and daughters were born to them, 2 the sons of God saw that the daughters of men were fair; and they took to wife such of them as they chose. 3 Then the Lord said, “My spirit shall not abide in man forever, for he is flesh, but his days shall be a hundred and twenty years.” 4 The Nephilim were on the earth in those days, and also afterward, when the sons of God came in to the daughters of men, and they bore children to them. These were mighty men that were of old, the men of renown. 5 The Lord saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. 6 And the Lord was sorry that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him to his heart. 7 So the Lord said, “I will blot out man whom I have created from the face of the ground, man and beast and creeping things and birds of the air, for I am sorry that I have made them.” 8 But Noah found favor in the eyes of the Lord. (Genesis 6)

The flood continued forty days upon the earth; and the waters increased, and bore up the ark, and it rose high above the earth. 18 The waters prevailed and increased greatly upon the earth; and the ark floated on the face of the waters. 19 And the waters prevailed so mightily upon the earth that all the high mountains under the whole heaven were covered; 20 the waters prevailed above the mountains, covering them fifteen cubits deep. 21 And all flesh died that moved upon the earth, birds, cattle, beasts, all swarming creatures that swarmed upon the earth, and every man; 22 everything on the dry land in whose nostrils was the breath of life died. 23 He bloated out every living thing that was upon the face of the ground, man and animals and creeping things and birds of the air; they were bloated out from the earth. Only Noah was left, and those that were with him in the ark. (Genesis 7)

Sodom and Gomorrah Apocalypse

When morning dawned, the angels urged Lot, saying, “Arise, take your wife and your two daughters who are here, lest you be consumed in the punishment of the city.” 16 But he lingered; so the men seized him and his wife and his two daughters by the hand, the Lord being merciful to him, and they brought him forth and set him outside the city. 17 And when they had brought them forth, they[a] said, “Flee for your life; do not look back or stop anywhere in the valley; flee to the hills, lest the disaster overtake me, and I die. 18 Behold, yonder city is near enough to flee to, and it is a little one; Let me escape there—is it not a little one?—and my life will be saved!” 19 He said to him, “Behold, I grant you this favor also, that I will not overthrow the city of which you have spoken. 20 Make haste, escape there; for I can do nothing till you arrive there.” Then the Lord rained on Sodom and Gomorrah brimstone and fire from the Lord out of heaven; 25 and he overthrew those cities, and all the valley, and all the inhabitants of the cities, and what grew on the ground. 26 But Lot’s wife behind him looked back, and she became a pillar of salt. 27 And Abraham went early in the morning to the place where he had stood before the Lord; 28 and he looked down toward Sodom and Gomorrah and toward all the land of the valley, and beheld, and lo, the smoke of the land went up like
the smoke of a furnace. So it was that, when God destroyed the cities of the valley, God remembered Abraham, and sent Lot out of the midst of the overthrew, when he overthrew the cities in which Lot dwelt. (Genesis 19)

And the Lord said to Moses, “See, I make you as God to Pharaoh; and Aaron your brother shall be your prophet. You shall speak all that I command you; and Aaron your brother shall tell Pharaoh to let the people of Israel go out of his land. But I will harden Pharaoh’s heart, and though I multiply my signs and wonders in the land of Egypt, Pharaoh will not listen to you; then I will lay my hand upon Egypt and bring forth my hosts, my people the sons of Israel, out of the land of Egypt by great acts of judgment. And the Egyptians shall know that I am the Lord, when I stretch forth my hand upon Egypt and bring out the people of Israel from among them.” And Moses and Aaron did so; they did as the Lord commanded them. Now Moses was eighty years old, and Aaron eighty-three years old, when they spoke to Pharaoh. (Exodus 7:1-6)

And in the ninth year of his reign, in the tenth month, on the tenth day of the month, Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came with all his army against Jerusalem, and laid siege to it; and they built siege works against it round about. So the city was besieged till the eleventh year of King Zedekiah, king of Judah; and in the twelfth year of his reign, Zedekiah made war against Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, which was the eleventh year of Nebuchadnezzar. 3 On the ninth day of the fourth month the famine was so severe in the city that there was no food for the people of the land. 4 Then a breach was made in the city; the king with all the men of war fled[a] by night by the way of the gate between the two walls, by the king’s garden, though the Chaldeans were around the city. And they went in the direction of the Arabah. 5 But the army of the Chaldeans pursued the king, and overtook him in the plains of Jericho; and all his army was scattered from him. 6 Then they captured the king, and brought him up to the king of Babylon at Riblah, who passed sentence upon him. 7 They slew the sons of Zedekiah before his eyes, and put out the eyes of Zedekiah, and bound him in fetters, and took him to Babylon. 8 In the fifth month, on the seventh day of the month—which was the nineteenth year of King Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon—Nebuzaradan, the captain of the bodyguard, a servant of the king of Babylon, came to Jerusalem. 9 And he burned the house of the Lord, and the king’s house and all the houses of Jerusalem; every great house he burned down. 10 And all the army of the Chaldeans, who were with the captain of the guard, broke down the walls around Jerusalem. 11 And the rest of the people who were left in the city and the deserters who had deserted to the king of Babylon, together with the rest of the multitude, Nebuzaradan the captain of the guard carried into exile. 12 But the captain of the guard left some of the poorest of the land to be vinedressers and plowmen. (2 Kings 25)

And in the ninth year of his reign, in the tenth month, on the tenth day of the month, Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came with all his army against Jerusalem, and laid siege to it; and they built siege works against it round about. So the city was besieged till the eleventh year of King Zedekiah, king of Judah; and in the twelfth year of his reign, Zedekiah made war against Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, which was the eleventh year of Nebuchadnezzar. 3 On the ninth day of the fourth month the famine was so severe in the city that there was no food for the people of the land. 4 Then a breach was made in the city; the king with all the men of war fled[a] by night by the way of the gate between the two walls, by the king’s garden, though the Chaldeans were around the city. And they went in the direction of the Arabah. 5 But the army of the Chaldeans pursued the king, and overtook him in the plains of Jericho; and all his army was scattered from him. 6 Then they captured the king, and brought him up to the king of Babylon at Riblah, who passed sentence upon him. 7 They slew the sons of Zedekiah before his eyes, and put out the eyes of Zedekiah, and bound him in fetters, and took him to Babylon. 8 In the fifth month, on the seventh day of the month—which was the nineteenth year of King Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon—Nebuzaradan, the captain of the bodyguard, a servant of the king of Babylon, came to Jerusalem. 9 And he burned the house of the Lord, and the king’s house and all the houses of Jerusalem; every great house he burned down. 10 And all the army of the Chaldeans, who were with the captain of the guard, broke down the walls around Jerusalem. 11 And the rest of the people who were left in the city and the deserters who had deserted to the king of Babylon, together with the rest of the multitude, Nebuzaradan the captain of the guard carried into exile. 12 But the captain of the guard left some of the poorest of the land to be vinedressers and plowmen. (2 Kings 25)
not repent of their deeds. 12 The sixth angel poured his bowl on the great river Euphrates, and its water was dried up, to prepare the way for the kings from the east. 13 And I saw, issuing from the mouth of the dragon and from the mouth of the beast and from the mouth of the false prophet, three foul spirits like frogs; 14 for they are demonic spirits, performing signs, who go abroad to the kings of the whole world, to assemble them for battle on the great day of God the Almighty. 15 (“Lo, I am coming like a thief! Blessed is he who is awake, keeping his garments that he may not go naked and be seen exposed!”) 16 And they assembled them at the place which is called in Hebrew Armageddon. 17 The seventh angel poured his bowl into the air, and a loud voice came out of the temple, from the throne, saying, “It is done!” 18 And there were flashes of lightning, voices, peals of thunder, and a great earthquake such as had never been since men were on the earth, so great was that earthquake. 19 The great city was split into three parts, and the cities of the nations fell, and God remembered great Babylon, to make her drain the cup of the fury of his wrath. 20 And every island fled away, and no mountains were to be found; 21 and great hailstones, heavy as a hundredweight, dropped on men from heaven, till men cursed God for the plague of the hail, so fearful was that plague. (Revelation 16)

The Whore of Babylon

Then one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls came and said to me, “Come, I will show you the judgment of the great harlot who is seated upon many waters, 2 with whom the kings of the earth have committed fornication, and with the wine of whose fornication the dwellers on earth have become drunk.” 3 And he carried me away in the Spirit into a wilderness, and I saw a woman sitting on a scarlet beast which was full of blasphemous names, and it had seven heads and ten horns. 4 The woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet, and bedecked with gold and jewels and precious stones of every kind; and on her forehead was written a name of mystery: “Babylon the great, mother of harlots and of the abominations of the earth.” 5 And on her head were the names of the kings whom she has defiled; and on her arms were the jewels of the kings with whom she has dipped her whoredoms. 6 And I saw the woman, drunk with the blood of the saints and the blood of all who dwell on earth, 7 whom they have killed, the prophets, and the witnesses, and the just, and all who are inside the city, and who have not given in to the lusts of the beast. 8 9 And I saw another angel ascending from the rising of the sun, having the seal of the living God; 10 who proceeded and sealed the servants of God on their foreheads with the seal of the living God, that the day of wrath might not come upon them. 11 And I heard a voice from heaven saying, “Write this: Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord.” 12 And I heard a voice from the throne saying, “They shall come to life; the dead, the seventh will be the firstfruits; for their life is the life of the age to come.” 13 Then I remembered great Babylon, to make her drain the cup of the fury of his wrath. 14 And I saw thrones, and they were seated upon them, and judgments were given to them. 15 And I saw the souls of those who were beheaded because of their testimony for Jesus and because of the word of God, who had not worshipped the beast or his image, or received its mark on their forehead or their hand. 16 They lived and reigned with Christ for a thousand years. 17 The rest of the dead did not live until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection. 18 Blessed and holy is the one who has part in the first resurrection. Over such the second death has no power, but they will be priests of God and of Christ, and will reign with him for a thousand years. 19 And when the thousand years have passed, then Satan will be released from his bonds, 20 and will go out and go about the four corners of the earth to conquer the nations; 21 and he will gather them together to the battle, the battle of the great day of God the Almighty. 22 And he will be captured, and the false prophet who deceives them will be caught; 23 and he will be thrown into the lake of fire and brimstone, with the beast, and the false prophet; 24 and the rest will be killed with the sword of the Lamb, 25 and this is the last resurrection. 26 And the temple of God was revealed in heaven, and the ark of his covenant was seen in his temple; and there was an order, “He who is worthy, take the book and eat it; for it is sweet honey to those who are worthy.” 27 And he said to me, “This is the word of endurance; who everendures shall eat of the tree of life, and shall come into the city, the holy city, new Jerusalem, which comes down from God out of heaven.” 28 And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, “Look, the dwelling place of God is among men; he will live with them, and they will be his people, and God himself will be with them, and be their God. 29 God will wipe every tear from their eyes; there will be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying, nor pain, for the former things have passed away.” (Revelation 19)
Then I looked, and lo, on Mount Zion stood the Lamb, and with him a hundred and forty-four thousand who had his name and his Father’s name written on their foreheads. And I heard a voice from heaven like the sound of many waters and like the sound of loud thunder; the voice I heard was like the sound of harpers playing on their harps, and they sing a new song before the throne and before the four living creatures and before the elders. No one could learn that song except the hundred and forty-four thousand who had been redeemed from the earth. It is these who have not defiled themselves with women, for they are chaste; it is these who follow the Lamb wherever he goes; these have been redeemed from mankind as first fruits for God and the Lamb, and in their mouth no lie was found, for they are spotless. (Revelation 14)

6 Then I saw another angel flying in midheaven, with an eternal gospel to proclaim to those who dwell on earth, to every nation and tribe and tongue and people; and he said with a loud voice, “Fear God and give him glory, for the hour of his judgment has come; and worship him who made heaven and earth, the sea and the fountains of water.” Another angel, a second, followed, saying, “Fallen, fallen is Babylon the great, she who made all nations drink the wine of her impure passion.”

And another angel, a third, followed them, saying with a loud voice, “If any one worships the beast and its image, and receives a mark on his forehead or on his hand, he also shall drink the wine of God’s wrath, poured unmixed into the cup of his anger, and he shall be tormented with fire and sulphur in the presence of the holy angels and in the presence of the Lamb. And the smoke of their torment goes up for ever and ever; and they have no rest, day or night, these worshipers of the beast and its image, and whoever receives the mark of its name.” Here is a call for the endurance of the saints, those who keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus. And I heard a voice from heaven saying, “Write this: Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord henceforth.” “Blessed indeed,” says the Spirit, “that they may rest from their labors, for their deeds follow them!” (Revelation 14)

Then I heard a loud voice from the temple telling the seven angels, “Go and pour out on the earth the seven bowls of the wrath of God.” So the first angel went and poured his bowl on the earth, and foul and evil sores came upon the men who bore the mark of the beast and worshiped its image. The second angel poured his bowl into the sea, and it became like the blood of a dead man, and every living thing died that was in the sea. The third angel poured his bowl into the rivers and the fountains of water, and they became blood. The fourth angel poured his bowl on the sun, and it was allowed to scorch men with fire; men were scorched by the fierce heat, and they cursed the name of God who had power over these plagues, and they did not repent and give him glory. The fifth angel poured his bowl on the throne of the beast, and its kingdom was in darkness; men gnawed their tongues in anguish and cursed the God of heaven for their pain and sores, and did...
Then Herod summoned the wise men secretly and ascertained from them what time the star appeared; and he sent them to Bethlehem, saying, “Go and search diligently for the child, and when you have found him bring me word, that I too may come and worship him.” When they had heard the king they went their way; and lo, the star which they had seen in the East went before them, till it came to rest over the place where the child was. When they saw the star, they rejoiced exceedingly with great joy; and going into the house they saw the child with Mary his mother, and they fell down and worshiped him. Then, opening their treasures, they offered him gifts, gold and frankincense and myrrh. And being warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they departed to their own country by another way. (Matthew 2)

Jesus went up on the mountain, and there sat down with his disciples. Now the Passover, the feast of the Jews, was at hand. Lifting up his eyes, then, and seeing that a multitude was coming to him, Jesus said to Philip, “How are we to buy bread, so that these people may eat?” This he said to test him, for he himself knew what he would do. Philip answered him, “Two hundred denarii would not buy enough bread for each of them to get a little.” One of his disciples, Andrew, Simon Peter’s brother, said to him, “There is a lad here who has five barley loaves and two fish; but what are they among so many?” Jesus said, “Make the people sit down.” Now there was much grass in the place; so the men sat down, in number about five thousand. Jesus then took the loaves, and when he had given thanks, he distributed them to those who were seated; so also the fish, as much as they wanted. And when they had eaten their fill, he told his disciples, “Gather up the fragments left over, that nothing may be lost.” So they gathered them up and filled twelve baskets with fragments from the five barley loaves, left by those who had eaten. This calls for wisdom: let him who has understanding reckon the number of the beast, for it is a human number, its number is six hundred and sixty-six. (Revelation 13)
**King Claiming His Royal City**

And when they drew near to Jerusalem and came to Bethpage, to the Mount of Olives, then Jesus sent two disciples, 2 saying to them, “Go into the village opposite you, and immediately you will find an ass tied, and a colt with her; untie them and bring them to me. 3 If any one says anything to you, you shall say, ‘The Lord has need of them,’ and he will send them immediately.” 4 This took place to fulfill what was spoken by the prophet, saying, 5 “Tell the daughter of Zion, Behold, your king is coming to you, humble, and mounted on an ass, and on a colt, the foal of an ass.” 6 The disciples went and did as Jesus had directed them; 7 they brought the ass and the colt, and put their garments on them, and he sat thereon. 8 Most of the crowd spread their garments on the road, and others cut branches from the trees and spread them on the road. 9 And the crowds that went before him and that followed him shouted, “Hosanna to the Son of David! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord! Hosanna in the highest!” 10 And when he entered Jerusalem, all the city was stirred, saying, “Who is this?” 11 And the crowds said, “This is the prophet Jesus from Nazareth of Galilee.” (Matthew 21)

**King Before Pilate**

Then Pilate entered the headquarters again, summoned Jesus, and asked him, “Are you the King of the Jews?” 34 Jesus answered, “Do you ask this on your own, or did others tell you about me?” 35 Pilate replied, “I am not a Jew, am I? Your own nation and the chief priests have handed you over to me. What have you done?” 36 Jesus answered, “My kingdom is not from here.” 37 Pilate asked him, “So you are a king?” Jesus answered, “You say that I am a king. For this I was born, and for this I came into the world, to testify to the truth. Everyone who belongs to the truth listens to my voice.” (John 18)

**King on the Cross**

And the people stood by, watching; but the leaders scoffed at him, saying, “He saved others; let him save himself if he is the Messiah of God, his chosen one!” 36 The soldiers also mocked him, coming up and offering him sour wine 37 and saying, “If you are the King of the Jews, save yourself!” 38 There was also an inscription over him, “The Lord has need of them,” and he will send them immediately.” 4 This took place to fulfill what was spoken by the prophet, saying, 5 “Tell the daughter of Zion, Behold, your king is coming to you, humble, and mounted on an ass, and on a colt, the foal of an ass.” 6 The disciples went and did as Jesus had directed them; 7 they brought the ass and the colt, and put their garments on them, and he sat thereon. 8 Most of the crowd spread their garments on the road, and others cut branches from the trees and spread them on the road. 9 And the crowds that went before him and that followed him shouted, “Hosanna to the Son of David! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord! Hosanna in the highest!” 10 And when he entered Jerusalem, all the city was stirred, saying, “Who is this?” 11 And the crowds said, “This is the prophet Jesus from Nazareth of Galilee.” (Matthew 21)

**The Woman and the Dragon**

And a great portent appeared in heaven, a woman clothed with the sun, with the moon under her feet, and on her head a crown of twelve stars; 2 she was with child and she cried out in her pangs of birth, in anguish for delivery. 3 And another portent appeared in heaven; behold, a great red dragon, with seven heads and ten horns, and seven diadems upon his heads. 4 His tail swept down a third of the stars of heaven, and cast them to the earth. 5 And when the dragon saw that he had been thrown down to the earth, he pursued the woman who was about to bear a child, that he might devour her child when she brought it forth; 6 but she brought forth a male child, one who is to rule all the nations with a rod of iron, but her child was caught up to God and to his throne, 7 and the woman fled into the wilderness, where she has a place prepared by God, in which to be nourished for one thousand two hundred and sixty days. (Rev 12)

**St. Michael vs. the Dragon**

7 Now war arose in heaven, Michael and his angels fighting against the dragon; and the dragon and his angels fought, 8 but they were defeated and there was no longer any place for them in heaven. 9 And the great dragon was thrown down, that ancient serpent, who is called the Devil and Satan, the deceiver of the whole world—he was thrown down to the earth, and his angels were thrown down with him. 10 I heard a loud voice in heaven, saying, “Now the salvation and the power and the kingdom of our God and the authority of his Christ have come, for the accuser of our brethren has been thrown down, who accuses them day and night before our God. 11 And they have conquered him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony, for they loved not their lives even unto death. 12 Rejoice then, O heaven and you that dwell therein! But woe to you, O earth and sea, for the devil has come down to you in great wrath, because he knows that his time is short!” (Rev 12)

**The Dragon vs. the Offspring**

13 And when the dragon saw that he had been thrown down to the earth, he pursued the woman who had borne the male child. 14 But the woman was given the two wings of the great eagle that she might fly from the serpent into the wilderness, to the place where she is to be nourished for a time, and times, and half a time. 15 The serpent poured water like a river out of his mouth after the woman, to sweep her away with the flood. 16 But the earth came to the help of the woman, and the earth opened its mouth and swallowed the river which the dragon had poured from his mouth. 17 Then the dragon was angry with the woman, and went off to make war on the rest of her offspring, on those who keep the commandments of God and bear testimony to Jesus. And he stood[a] on the sand of the sea. (Revelation 12)
When the Son of man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, then he will sit on his glorious throne. Before him will be gathered all the nations, and he will separate them one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats, and he will place the sheep at his right hand, but the goats at the left. Then the King will say to those at his right hand, ‘Come, O blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world; for I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you clothed me, I was sick and you visited me, I was in prison and you came to me.’ Then the righteous will answer him, ‘Lord, when did we see thee hungry and feed thee, or thirsty and give thee drink? And when did we see thee a stranger and welcome thee, or naked and clothe thee? And when did we see thee sick or in prison and visit thee?’ And the King will answer them, ‘Truly, I say to you, as you did it to one of the least of these my brethren, you did it to me.’ Then he will say to those at his left hand, ‘Depart from me, you cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels; for I was hungry and you gave me no food, I was thirsty and you gave me no drink, I was a stranger and you did not welcome me, naked and you did not clothe me, sick and in prison and you did not visit me.’ Then they also will answer, ‘Lord, when did we see thee hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or sick or in prison, and did not minister to thee?’ Then he will answer them, ‘Truly, I say to you, as you did it not to one of the least of these, you did it not to me.’ And they will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life.” (Matthew 25)

I saw in the night visions, and behold, with the clouds of heaven there came one like a son of man, and he came to the Ancient of Days and was presented before him. And to him was given dominion and glory and kingdom, that all peoples, nations, and languages should serve him; his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom one that shall not be destroyed. (Daniel 7)

Discussion Questions

- One of the titles given to Jesus is “Son of David.” What are the significance of this title and the importance of King David in the ancestral line of Jesus as well as the Davidic Kingdom vis-à-vis the Kingship of Christ?

- Following the miracle of the Multiplication of Loaves the Jews wanted to make Jesus their king but he hid from them. Why would Jesus withdraw Himself from them and what can we learn about the nature of his Kingship?

- The Kingship of Christ will be recognized and acknowledged by every single person, angelic and human, at the end of time. What bearing does the Kingship of Christ have on the Church and world in the present time?
SESSION III

THE FINAL APOCALYPSE
(Part 1)

The Seventh Trumpet

Then the seventh angel blew his trumpet and there were loud voices in heaven, saying, “The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ, and he shall reign for ever and ever.” And the twenty-four elders who sit on their thrones before God fell on their faces and worshiped God, saying, “We give thanks to thee, Lord God Almighty, who art and who wast, that thou hast taken thy great power and begun to reign. The nations raged, but thy wrath came, time for the dead to be judged, for rewarding thy servants, the prophets and saints, and those who fear thy name, both small and great, and for destroying the destroyers of the earth.” Then God’s temple in heaven was opened, and the ark of his covenant was seen within his temple; and there were flashes of lightning, voices, peals of thunder, an earthquake, and heavy hail. (Rev 11)

Discussion Questions

- There are letters written to seven ancient churches of Asia Minor, with commendations and condemnations. What might a letter look like today written to your own parish or the Catholic Church in the U.S.?

- Explain the figure of the Lamb that seemed to have been slain and the essential significance of this figure in what has already taken place in salvation history and what remains to play out in the final apocalypse.

- There have been non-Catholic sects that have claimed that there will be only 144,000 total people saved from the entire population of humanity. Are there better interpretations of the biblical reference to 144,000 sealed?
The Two Witnesses

Then I was given a measuring rod like a staff, and I was told: “Rise and measure the temple of God and the altar and those who worship there, 2 but do not measure the court outside the temple; leave that out, for it is given over to the nations, and they will trample over the holy city for forty-two months. 3 And I will grant my two witnesses power to prophesy for one thousand two hundred and sixty days, clothed in sackcloth.” 4 These are the two olive trees and the two lampstands which stand before the Lord of the earth. 5 And if any one would harm them, fire pours from their mouth and consumes their foes; if anyone would harm them, thus he is doomed to be killed. 6 They have power to shut the sky, that no rain may fall during the days of their prophesying, and they have power to strew dust on the earth. 7 But if any one should ask what the dust means, he will reply, “The great city has made them drunk with the wine of the prostitute who seduces the nations.” 8 (Rev 11)

The Heavenly Sanctuary

1 After this I looked, and lo, in heaven an open door! And the first voice, which I had heard speaking aloud the words of the prophecy, and blessed are those who hear, and who keep what is written therein; for the time is near. 2 John to the seven churches that are in Asia: Grace to you and peace from him who is and who was and who is to come, and from the seven spirits who are before his throne, 3 and from Jesus Christ the faithful witness, the first-born of the dead, and the ruler of kings on earth. To him who loves us and has freed us from our sins by his blood and made us a kingdom, priests to his God and Father, to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen. 4 I am the Alpha and the Omega,” says the Lord God, who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty. (Revelation 1)

The Revelation of Jesus Christ

The revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave him to show to his servants what must soon take place; and he made it known by sending his angel to his servant John, 2 who bore witness to the word of God and to the testimony of Jesus Christ, even to all that he saw. 3 Blessed is he who reads aloud the words of the prophecy, and blessed are those who hear, and who keep what is written therein; for the time is near. 4 John to the seven churches that are in Asia: Grace to you and peace from him who is and who was and who is to come, and from the seven spirits who are before his throne, 5 and from Jesus Christ the faithful witness, the first-born of the dead, and the ruler of kings on earth. To him who loves us and has freed us from our sins by his blood and made us a kingdom, priests to his God and Father, to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen. 6 “I am the Alpha and the Omega,” says the Lord God, who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty. (Revelation 1)

Message to Seven Churches

8 “And to the angel of the church in Smyrna write: ‘The words of the first and the last, who died and came to life, 9 ¶I know your tribulation and your poverty (but you are rich) and the slander of those who say that they are Jews and are not, but are a synagogue of Satan. 10 Do not fear what you are about to suffer. Behold, the devil is about to throw some of you into prison, that you may be tested, and for ten days you will have tribulation. Be faithful unto death, and I will give you the crown of life. 11 He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. He who conquers shall not be hurt by the second death.’” (Revelation 3)

Seven Trumpets

6 Now the seven angels who had the seven trumpets made ready to blow them. 7 The first angel blew his trumpet, and there followed hail and fire, mixed with blood, which fell on the earth; and a third of the earth was burnt up, and a third of the trees were burnt up, and all green grass was burnt up. 8 The second angel blew his trumpet, and something like a great mountain, burning with fire, came over the land, and a third of the earth was burnt up, and a third of the trees were burnt up, and all green grass was burnt up. 9 For three days and a half men from the peoples and tribes and tongues and nations gazed at their dead bodies and refused to let them be placed in a tomb, 10 and those who dwell on the earth will wail on account of him. Even so, Amen. 11 “I am the Alpha and the Omega,” says the Lord God, who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty. (Revelation 8)
Worthy is the Lamb

1 And I saw in the right hand of him who was seated on the throne a scroll written within and on the back, sealed with seven seals; 2 and I saw a strong angel proclaiming with a loud voice, “Who is worthy to open the scroll and break its seals?” 3 And no one in heaven or on earth or under the earth was able to open the scroll or to look into it, 4 and I wept much that no one was found worthy to open the scroll or to look into it. 5 Then one of the elders said to me, “Weep not; lo, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, has conquered, so that he can open the scroll and its seven seals.” 6 And between the throne and the four living creatures and among the elders, I saw a lamb standing, as though it had been slain, with seven horns and with seven eyes, which are the seven spirits of God sent out into all the earth; 7 and he went and took the scroll from the right hand of him who was seated on the throne. 8 And when he had taken the scroll, the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders fell down before the Lamb, each holding a harp, and with golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints; 9 and they sang a new song, saying, “Worthy art thou to take the scroll and to open its seals, for thou wast slain and by thy blood didst ransom men for God from every tribe and tongue and people and nation, 10 and hast made them a kingdom and priests to our God, and they shall reign on earth.” 11 Then I looked, and I heard around the throne and the living creatures and the elders the voice of many angels, numbering myriads of myriads and thousands of thousands, 12 saying with a loud voice, “Worthy is the Lamb who was slain, to receive power and wealth and wisdom and might and honor and glory and blessing!” 13 And I heard every creature in heaven and on earth and under the earth and in the sea, and all therein, saying, “To him who sits upon the throne and to the Lamb be blessing and honor and glory and might for ever and ever!” 14 And the four living creatures said, “Amen!” and the elders fell down and worshiped. (Revelation 5)

The Seven Seals

Now I saw when the Lamb opened one of the seven seals, and I heard one of the four living creatures say, as with a voice of thunder, “Come!” 2 And I saw, and behold, a white horse, and its rider had a bow; and a crown was given to him, and he went out conquering and to conquer. 3 When he opened the second seal, I heard the second living creature say, “Come!” 4 And out came another horse, bright red; its rider was permitted to take peace from the earth, so that men should slay one another; and he was given a great sword. 5 And I saw, and behold, a black horse, and its rider had a balance in his hand; and they said, “A measure of wheat for a denarius,[a] and three quarts of barley for a denarius,[b] but do not harm oil and wine!” 7 When he opened the fourth seal, I heard the voice of the fourth living creature say, “Come!” 8 And I saw, and behold, a pale horse, and its rider’s name was Death, and Hades followed him; and they were given power over a fourth of the earth, to kill with sword and with famine and with pestilence and with wild beasts of the earth. 9 When he opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of those who had been slain for the word of God and for the witness they had borne; 10 and they cried out with a loud voice, “O Sovereign Lord, holy and true, how long before thou wilt judge and avenge our blood on those who dwell upon the earth?” 11 Then they were each given a white robe and told to rest a little longer, until the number of their fellow servants and their brethren should be complete, who were to be killed as they themselves had been. 12 When he opened the sixth seal, I looked, and behold, there was a great earthquake; and the sun became black as sackcloth, the full moon became like blood, 13 and the stars of the sky fell to the earth as the fig tree sheds its winter fruit when shaken by a gale; 14 the sky vanished like a scroll that is rolled up, and every mountain and island was removed from its place. 15 Then the kings of the earth and the great men and the generals and the rich and the strong, and every one, slave and free, hid in the caves and among the rocks of the mountains, 16 calling to the mountains and rocks, “Fall on us and hide us from the face of him who is seated on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb; 17 for the great day of their wrath has come, and who can stand before it?” (Revelation 6)

The 144,000 Saved

After this I saw four angels standing at the four corners of the earth, holding back the four winds of the earth, that no wind might blow on earth or sea or against any tree. 2 Then I saw another angel ascend from the rising of the sun, with the seal of the living God, and he called with a loud voice to the four angels who had been given power to harm earth and sea, 3 saying, “Do not harm the earth or the sea or the trees, till we have sealed the servants of our God upon their foreheads.” 4 And I heard the number of the sealed, a hundred and forty-four thousand sealed, out of every tribe of the sons of Israel, 5 twelve thousand sealed out of the tribe of Judah, …twelve thousand sealed out of the tribe of Benjamin. 6 Then I looked, and I heard, and saw a Lamb standing, as though it had been slain, with seven horns and with seven eyes, which are the seven spirits of God sent out into all the earth; 7 and he went and took the scroll from the right hand of him who was seated on the throne. 8 And when he had taken the scroll, the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders fell down before the Lamb, each holding a harp, and with golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints; 9 and they sang a new song, saying, “Worthy art thou to take the scroll and to open its seals, for thou wast slain and by thy blood didst ransom men for God from every tribe and tongue and people and nation, 10 and hast made them a kingdom and priests to our God, and they shall reign on earth.” 11 Then I looked, and I heard around the throne and the living creatures and the elders the voice of many angels, numbering myriads of myriads and thousands of thousands, 12 saying with a loud voice, “Worthy is the Lamb who was slain, to receive power and wealth and wisdom and might and honor and glory and blessing!” 13 And I heard every creature in heaven and on earth and under the earth and in the sea, and all therein, saying, “To him who sits upon the throne and to the Lamb be blessing and honor and glory and might for ever and ever!” 14 And the four living creatures said, “Amen!” and the elders fell down and worshiped. (Revelation 7)

The Seventh Seal

When the Lamb opened the seventh seal, there was silence in heaven for about half an hour. 2 Then I saw the seven angels who stand before God, and seven trumpets were given to them. 3 And I saw, and behold, there was a great earthquake; and the sun became black as sackcloth, the full moon became like blood, 4 and the stars of the sky fell to the earth as the fig tree sheds its winter fruit when shaken by a gale; 5 the sky vanished like a scroll that is rolled up, and every mountain and island was removed from its place. 6 Then the kings of the earth and the great men and the generals and the rich and the strong, and every one, slave and free, hid in the caves and among the rocks of the mountains, 7 calling to the mountains and rocks, “Fall on us and hide us from the face of him who is seated on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb; 8 for the great day of their wrath has come, and who can stand before it?” (Revelation 8)