

DAY ONE

1. Share with your group some insight from the commentary or from your small group meeting that stayed with you this past week.

Read Revelation 5:1-2

2a. Chapter 5 continues John's account of what he saw when he passed through the open door to heaven. After witnessing the continuous adoration of God by all in heaven, what did he see according to the first sentence of verse 1?

b. In ancient times, books were written on papyrus scrolls, rolled up and sealed. What do you think was the significance of the following phrases that described the scroll from the second sentence of verse 1?

Writing on both sides

Sealed with seven seals

3a. The seven seals on the scroll were to be broken one by one in order to open the scroll and reveal what was written inside. What connection can you make between that and how we live our everyday lives?

b. Comment on what you think might be contained in the scroll? (Recall the message from Revelation 4:1.)

4. Then, John saw a mighty angel (verse 2). The word, angel, comes from the Greek word, angelos, which means messenger. Scripture has many references to angels. Look up and record one of the following verses.

Psalm 91:11-12

Malachi 3:1

Hebrews 13:2

5. What did the angel proclaim in a loud voice in the second part of verse 2?

6. CONNECTION: In today's readings John saw a mighty angel. The Catholic Church's teaching that God created angels is based on both scripture and tradition (CCC 328-336). An angel is a pure spirit created by God. Old Testament theology included belief in angels and they referred to certain spiritual beings or intelligences of heavenly residence, employed by God, as the ministers of his will. Angels play a big role in the Book of Revelation. What is your understanding of angels as spiritual intercessors and holy beings? Share some thoughts with your group.

The Catholic Church teaches and encourages us to ask angels for their help and intercession in our lives. Write a prayer today asking angels that surround you and your loved ones for their assistance.

DAY TWO

Read Revelation 5:3-4

7a. As we begin today, John has seen a mighty angel who asked for someone worthy to open the scroll and break its seals. A search then began for such a person according to verse 3. Where did they look and what was the result?

b. What qualities would you look for if you needed someone worthy to perform an important task?

8. Look up one of the following scripture passages from the letters of St. Paul and record a few phrases that describe worthiness in the eyes of God.

Ephesians 4:1-3

Philippians 4:8

Colossians 1:10-12

9. According to verse 4, what was John's reaction to all of this?

10. Have you ever searched for something truly valuable or for someone really important to you but without success? What was your reaction?

11. Psalms often reflect prayers of grief and of seeking comfort from the Lord. Record one of the following verses.

Psalm 42:4

Psalm 71:20-21

12. CONNECTION: Today we read that John shed many tears in heaven because he was, as yet, unable to find someone worthy to open the scroll and break the seals. The search may still be successful but John has given in to despair and sorrow. The same is true in our lives. We get frustrated and upset when we don't know what's going to happen and can't make our plans. If we have patience and trust, we would see that God has a solution for all our problems in his time. Record one or two thoughts you have right now about something in the future that requires your faith, and how you can wait in patient trust. Share this with your group if you are comfortable.

In Matthew 6:34 we learn, "Do not worry about tomorrow; tomorrow will take care of itself." Spend your prayer time today reflecting on the call to live more fully in the present moment.

DAY THREE
Read Revelation 5:5-7

13a. As we begin today's lesson, John wept because no one had been found worthy to open the scroll. But then, in verse 5, one of the elders reassured him saying, "Do not weep." What did he tell John?

b. Record a phrase from one of the following scripture passages that relates to this title and comment on whom that might be.

Genesis 49:9

Isaiah 11:1

Matthew 1:1

14a. Though he has been told to expect a lion, what did John see standing in the midst of the throne, the four living creatures and the elders according to the first sentence in verse 6?

b. Describe this apparent contradiction in your own words. (Refer to Isaiah 53:7; John 1:29)

NOTE: This is the supreme moment of John's vision when Christ appears as the Paschal Lamb without blemish whose blood saved the new Israel from sin and death. This is the main title for Christ in Revelation, used 28 times. *NABRE*

15. Today, many countries, schools and sports teams have chosen animals as symbols of power and authority. List some that come to mind. Are any of them lambs? Why do you think that is?

16. In the second sentence of verse 6, the Lamb was described in more detail. Select one of the attributes mentioned below and comment on its symbolism.

seven horns

seven eyes

seven spirits of God sent out into the world

17a. According to verse 7, what did the Lamb do?

b. What does this tell you about the relationship between these two figures?

18. CONNECTION: In the vision we read about today, John was told to expect a lion but instead he saw a Lamb. Only this figure, of all those in heaven, on earth and under the earth was worthy to receive the scroll from God. Recall a time in your life when you needed someone powerful to help but instead someone humble and gentle as a lamb was able to conquer or remedy the situation for you. Share some details with you group.

Read Philippians 4:13. Express gratitude in your prayer time today knowing that in your weakness, God provides strength in surprising ways.

DAY FOUR

Read Revelation 5:8-9

19. As we begin our lesson today, the Lamb received the scroll from the right hand of the one who sat on the throne. According to verse 8, what did the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders do, and what two things were they holding?

20a. How was the incense described according to the remainder of that verse?

b. What is the symbolism and purpose of incense? Read and record Psalm 141:2 to help you answer.

21. Whom do you consider to be the holy ones whose prayers are presented before the Lamb (verse 8)?

22. In verse 9 the heavenly chorus sang a new hymn of praise, "Worthy are you to receive the scroll and to break open its seals." From the words of their beautiful hymn below, select one of the following phrases and explain its significance.

You were slain

with your blood you purchased for God

those from every tribe, tongue, people and nation

23. Many psalms encourage God's people to sing a new song in response to a new act of salvation. Record one of them from the selection that follows.

Psalm 33:3

Psalm 96:1-2

Psalm 149:1

24. **CONNECTION:** We learn today that, in John's vision, heaven itself is filled with incense and the music of adoration and praise. The heavenly host sang a new hymn and offered praise with faith renewed and affirmed by the presence of the Lamb who accepted his role of carrying out God's plan. Our worship experience, too, is enhanced by song and incense. A song can express great joy, love, and other strong emotions. A song can remind us of important times in our lives, of new life, transformation and growth. Can you think of a new experience you had recently when a song or music figured prominently?

If possible, add some spiritual music to your prayer time today.

DAY FIVE

Read Revelation 5:10-12

25. As we begin our lesson today, the four living creatures and twenty-four elders continued their new song. According to verse 10, for what reason was the Lamb praised and found worthy to receive the scroll?

26a. Many scripture verses suggest how Christ intended his people to become a servant community of priests to serve God. Record one of the following verses.

Exodus 19: 5-6

1 Peter 2:5

Revelation 1:6

b. Give an example from your life this past week when you served another in a priestly function.

27. According to verse 11, what two things did John do next?

28a. The voices were countless in number (verse 11). They cried out again in song. List the seven things they said the slain Lamb was worthy to receive (verse 12).

b. Think of an example of a gospel story that illustrates one of these attributes of Jesus and record some details to share.

NOTE: The translation of the text, countless, is literally, 100,000,000 plus 1,000,000, used by the author to express infinity. *NABRE*

29. Countless angels surrounded the heavenly throne and added yet another level of praise focusing on more qualities of the Lamb. Comment on what you think praise is and why it is a proper form of prayer.

30. CONNECTION: In John's revelation about heaven, we read today that the only one worthy to open the scroll that holds the secrets of God is the Lamb that was slain, the crucified Jesus. The song of the angels praises him for his wondrous deeds. Through his death and resurrection, he has triumphed. We, the faithful, are blessed to share in his reign and priesthood. Does contemplation of this scene change your appreciation of the crucified and risen Christ and his significance in your life? What are some ways to show greater worship and reverence for the glorified, risen Christ? Share some thoughts with your group.

Write a prayer of praise during your prayer time today.

DAY SIX

Read Revelation 5:13-14

31a. Today's lesson begins as John heard a great cry of praise and adoration. As the song of praise grew more intense, who cried out according to verse 13?

b. Think of a time when you were part of a great commotion of excitement like the roar of a crowd, the crescendo of a symphony or the echo of prolonged applause. Describe how you felt.

32. This third and greatest level of praise was directed to both the one who sits on the throne and the lamb. Record the words of praise the whole of creation added to those in heaven (verse 13).

33. Record the response of the heavenly beings below from verse 14.

the four living creatures

elders

34a. Look up the word, amen, in the dictionary and record a definition.

b. Consider the power and depth of this word in prayer and liturgy, and comment on what this response means to you?

35. CONNECTION: Our passage today is a beautiful description of all creation, every living thing, joining together in a song of praise to God and the Lamb. There is power, beauty and grace when a community comes together to give God glory and praise. Think of a time when you participated with a group, united in an offering of praise and gratitude. Share some details with your group.

Read and record Psalm 92:1-2. Let this thought lead you into prayer today.

Read pages 33-35 in the *New Colledgeville Commentary, The Book of Revelation* by Catherine A. Cory, Ph.D. The Cornerstone Catholic Scripture Study acknowledges that scripture quotations in this study are from the New American Bible, Revised Edition (NABRE) © 2010, 1991, 1970 Confraternity of Christian Doctrine, Inc., Washington, DC. All Rights Reserved. Used by permission.