

The Paraclete and the Vine

John 14-16 · A Catholic Journey Through the Gospel of John

Part 1: Leader Preparation Guide

Session Overview

Discovery Aim: Participants discover that on his last night Jesus builds everything his people will need for the time after: the way to the Father that is himself, four promises of another Advocate who will guard the apostles' memory and guide them into all truth, and the vine in which abiding is life and apart from which we can do nothing. The seven great I AM predicates complete tonight, and the dwelling thread the group has traced from a tent to a body makes its final, staggering move: into the believer.

Catholic Touchstone: The Holy Spirit and the apostolic memory. The Paraclete promises of this discourse, he will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all that I have said to you (14:26), he will guide you into all truth (16:13), are the charter of the inspired Gospels and of the Church's living transmission of the deposit (CCC 76-79). And the vine: the Spirit is the sap of the Father's vine which bears fruit on its branches (CCC 1108).

What You Need to Know

Chapters 14 through 16 are one conversation on one night, the longest sustained teaching in the Gospel, and the tone has changed: the crowds are gone, the betrayer is gone, and Jesus speaks now only to his own. The first sentence hands them his own vocabulary: let not your hearts be troubled (*tarassō*), the very verb used of Jesus himself three times as the Hour approached (11:33, 12:27, 13:21). He has carried the trouble so they need not. The comfort begins with real estate: in my Father's house are many rooms, *monai*, dwelling places, and file the word, because it returns transformed within the chapter. Thomas, honest and gloomy as ever, objects that they do not even know the road, and his objection births the sixth predicate I AM: I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father, but by me (14:6). Two payoffs to collect on the spot. First, the group's Session 5 press argued that in John the truth is not a concept but a person; here is the receipt, from Jesus' own mouth. Second, the way is not directions he gives but a road he is: Christianity does not primarily hand out maps; it carries passengers.

The Paraclete promises, four of them across the discourse, are the session's doctrinal spine, and the word matters: *Paraklētos*, one called alongside, advocate, counselor, comforter, a courtroom word for the friend who stands with you. And Jesus says the Father will give another Paraclete, *allos*, another Advocate besides the one they have had, which quietly tells us, with 1 John 2:1, who the first Advocate was. Promise one (14:16-17): the Spirit of truth will be with you for ever, dwells with you, and will be in you. Promise two (14:26): he will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all that I have said to you, the verse on which the reliability of the Gospels themselves rests, and the home of tonight's steelman, so prepare it with care. Promise three (15:26): the Spirit of truth, who proceeds from the Father, he will bear witness to me, and your group should hear the Creed waking up in their hands: who proceeds from the Father is this verse verbatim. A gentle note if it arises: Jesus also says whom I shall send to you from the Father, the sending from the Son, which the Latin tradition confesses as proceeding from the Father and the Son and the Greek Fathers loved to phrase from the Father through the Son; one

sentence of irenic accuracy, and move on. Promise four (16:7-15): the astonishing it is to your advantage that I go away, for the Paraclete will convict the world concerning sin and righteousness and judgment, and will guide you into all truth... he will glorify me. The Spirit's ministry is Christ-centripetal: he does not freelance; he glorifies the Son, reminds, and guides, which is also, note well, the test of every claimed movement of the Spirit since.

Between the first and second promises sits the dwelling thread's final move, and it deserves a real board moment. The group has traced God's dwelling narrowing for eleven sessions: the tent of 1:14, Bethel and its ladder at 1:51, the temple of his body at 2:21, and worship relocated into that body in chapter 4. Now 14:23: if a man loves me, he will keep my word, and my Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home with him, *monēn*, the singular of the many rooms of 14:2, and the noun of the verb that will dominate chapter 15, *menō*, to abide, to remain, to dwell. The dwelling of God has narrowed to one body, and from that body it now widens into everyone who loves and keeps his word: tent, ladder, temple, you. The indwelling of the Trinity in the soul in grace, the doctrine the mystics never stopped singing, is this verse. And the discourse's bequest follows: peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you; not as the world gives (14:27), words the Church places on the priest's lips at Mass, lightly adapted, just before Communion. Your group has been praying this chapter weekly without knowing the address.

Chapter 15 opens with the seventh and final predicate: I am the true vine. Ceremony first, content second: the board's I AM line, opened at a Samaritan well, now carries seven predicates, bread of life, light of the world, the door, the good shepherd, the resurrection and the life, the way and the truth and the life, the true vine, and the group that kept the tally deserves to read them aloud in a row. Then the Old Testament engine, tonight's live discovery: Israel was the vine, brought out of Egypt and planted (Psalm 80:8-16), and the vineyard song of Isaiah 5 records the tragedy: the beloved's vineyard, given every care, yielded wild grapes. When Jesus says true vine, he is claiming to be, in his own person, the faithful Israel the vine was always meant to be: the stock that finally bears. The Father is the vinedresser, and the Greek plays on his tools: every fruitless branch he takes away (*airei*), every fruitful one he prunes (*kathairei*) that it may bear more. Do not soften 15:2 and 15:6 for your group, and note their doctrinal weight honestly: every branch of mine that bears no fruit, of mine, genuinely in him, and such branches can be cast forth, wither, and burn. Abiding is not automatic; union with Christ, really begun, can really be abandoned, which is why the Church has never taught once saved, always saved, and Trent, teaching on grace and abiding, reached for this very vine (citing 15:5). The remedy is the chapter's refrain, ten times in eleven verses: abide, *menō*, remain, dwell, stay connected, for apart from me you can do nothing (15:5; CCC 2074). And the deepest abiding this Gospel knows was named at Capernaum: he who eats my flesh and drinks my blood abides in me, and I in him (6:56; CCC 1391). St. Cyril of Alexandria drew the line the Church still draws: the branches share the vine's own life the way communicants share Christ's own flesh; the Eucharist is how the sap flows.

The rest of the discourse alternates tenderness and storm. No longer do I call you servants... but I have called you friends (15:15), and the election that follows is for mission: you did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit. Then the storm: the world's hatred, if they persecuted me, they will persecute you, and the escalation of *aposynagōgos*: they will put you out of the synagogues; indeed, the hour is coming when whoever kills you will think he is offering service to God (16:2). And near the end, an image that belongs to your Hour line and quietly to next session: when a woman is in travail she has sorrow, because her hour has come; but when she is delivered of the child, she no longer remembers the anguish, for joy (16:21). The Hour, which the group has tracked as appointment and as glory, is here named as labor: the anguish that is the mechanism of the joy, the birth-pangs the prophets promised for the age to come (Isaiah 26:17, 66:7-14, leader background). File

privately: a Woman, anguish, and something being born will all stand together at the foot of the cross next week. The discourse ends with the sentence the Church has carried through every persecution since: I have said this to you, that in me you may have peace. In the world you have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world (16:33). Perfect tense: the outcome is already settled, announced the night before the battle.

Old Testament Roots and Fulfillment

- **Psalm 80:8-16.** Thou didst bring a vine out of Egypt: Israel as the transplanted vine, ravaged and burned, with the plea, have regard for this vine. The central live discovery.
- **Isaiah 5:1-7.** The song of the vineyard: every care given, and it yielded wild grapes. Read aloud or second lookup; the tragedy the true vine answers.
- **Isaiah 26:17 and 66:7-14.** The birth-pangs of the age to come: Zion in travail, and joy after. Leader background for 16:21.
- **Zechariah 13:7.** Strike the shepherd, that the sheep may be scattered: behind 16:32, you will be scattered, every man to his home. Leader background.

Voices of the Church

VOICES OF THE CHURCH: St. Irenaeus of Lyons (c. 130-202), *Against Heresies* 3.24

Irenaeus, two generations from the apostles, states where the Paraclete's promises live: where the Church is, there is the Spirit of God; and where the Spirit of God is, there is the Church, and every kind of grace. The Spirit and the apostolic community are not rivals to be chosen between; they are one gift with one address. Those who separate themselves from the Church, he says, separate themselves from the Spirit's fountain, drinking instead from cracked cisterns of their own digging, and the group has met that image before.

VOICES OF THE CHURCH: St. Cyril of Alexandria (c. 376-444), *Doctor of the Church, Commentary on the Gospel of John, on chapter 15*

Cyril will not let the vine stay a metaphor about attitudes. As the branch shares the very nature and life of the vine, he argues, so we come to share Christ's own life, and not merely by affection or agreement: through the Eucharist we are united to his very flesh, the mystical blessing making us concorporeal with him, so that his life circulates in us the way sap circulates in branches. Abide in me is not a mood; it is a communion, and the Church keeps it at an altar.

VOICES OF THE CHURCH: St. Catherine of Siena (1347-1380), *Doctor of the Church, The Dialogue*

Catherine's great image for I am the way is the Bridge: the eternal Father showed her his Son as a bridge stretched from heaven to earth, built across the flood that no one could ford, with the wounded feet, the open side, and the mouth of peace as its stairs. There is no crossing the flood except by the Bridge, she hears the Father say, and whoever tries to swim it drowns. No one comes to the Father but by me is not a narrowness, Catherine insists; it is the only architecture that spans the gap at all, and it was built at the price of the builder.

Catechism Connection

- **CCC 76-79.** The apostolic Tradition: the Spirit-guarded transmission of what the apostles received, in Scripture and in the Church's living memory, so that the Father's conversation with the Bride never ceases. The doctrinal home of 14:26 and 16:13.
- **CCC 245-246.** The procession of the Spirit: the Creed's who proceeds from the Father from 15:26, and the Latin and Eastern traditions' complementary confessions, from the Father and the Son, and from the Father through the Son.
- **CCC 1108.** The Catechism's own vine sentence: the Holy Spirit is the sap of the Father's vine which bears its fruit on its branches; the sacraments are where the sap flows.
- **CCC 2074.** Apart from me you can do nothing: the fruitfulness of every work depends on abiding, quoted directly from 15:5.
- **CCC 1391.** Holy Communion augments our union with Christ: he who eats my flesh and drinks my blood abides in me, and I in him; the vine's abiding and the Eucharist's abiding are one vocabulary.

Thread Watch

THREAD WATCH

I AM (PREDICATES COMPLETE). The sixth (way, truth, life, 14:6) and seventh (true vine, 15:1) predicates complete the set. Hold the ceremony: have the group read all seven aloud from the board in order. The absolute uses are not finished; one remains, in a garden, next session, and it will knock men down. Leader knowledge only.

The dwelling thread (INTERIORIZES). Tent (1:14), Bethel (1:51), temple of his body (2:21), and now: we will come to him and make our home with him (14:23), and abide in me (15:4). The dwelling of God narrowed to a body and now widens into everyone who loves him and keeps his word. Draw the final arrow on the board and let it land.

The truth is a person (PAYS OFF). The Session 5 press claimed it; 14:6 signs it. Collect the receipt aloud.

Living water and the Spirit. The not yet given of 7:39 gets its schedule: it is to your advantage that I go away, for if I do not go, the Paraclete will not come (16:7). The glorification releases the Spirit. The hinge the group logged at Tabernacles is swinging.

The Hour (AS LABOR). A new and tender entry: the woman in travail, because her hour has come, and joy that forgets the anguish (16:21). The Hour is appointment, glory, and now birth-pang. Log it; say nothing of where a Woman and an anguish will stand next week.

Peter and the scattering. You will be scattered, every man to his home (16:32). The denial prediction gains company; Zechariah's struck shepherd is leader background.

Cana to the vine. Quiet arc worth one sentence if the group finds it: the study opened with water made wine, and the discourse ends with I am the true vine. The wine had a source all along.

Passover and the Lamb (sealed, MATURITY NEXT SESSION). Nothing advances tonight, and everything is about to. Take-Home 12 instructs every participant to bring their sealed guess to Session 13. Make sure it does not get skipped.

Session Goals

1. Participants can name the four Paraclete promises and what each gives: presence, memory and teaching, witness and procession, conviction and guidance into all truth.
2. Participants hear the strongest private-interpretation reading of the promises and weigh it against the upper room's addressees, the unfulfillable-remembrance problem, and the both/and of Spirit and Church.
3. Participants complete the seven predicate I AMs and read them aloud as a set.
4. Participants trace the dwelling thread's interiorization, tent to Bethel to body to believer, and connect abiding to the Eucharist (6:56, CCC 1391).
5. Participants can state honestly what 15:2 and 15:6 teach about perseverance, and take apart from me you can do nothing personally.

Time Note (90 minutes)

Opening prayer and Win, 12 minutes. Build, 60 minutes; three chapters demand thematic movement, not verse-crawling. Send, Live It This Week, and closing prayer, 18 minutes. If running long, the pre-chosen cuts are, in order: Build question 7 on friendship and election (compress to leader narration), the Isaiah 5 second lookup (read it aloud yourself instead), and the Dig Deeper on the Advocate in court. Do not cut: 14:6 with its Session 5 receipt, the steelman, the vine discovery with the seven-predicate ceremony, the 14:23 dwelling move, or 16:33. End by reminding everyone, twice, to bring their sealed guess next week.

Part 2: Discussion Guide

Opening Prayer

Leader prays aloud: Come, Holy Spirit, Paraclete, Advocate, Spirit of truth. On his last night the Lord promised you to his friends, to teach, to remind, to abide. We are his friends gathered tonight; keep the promise here. Prune what is fruitless in us, keep us on the vine, and let not our hearts be troubled. Amen.

Win (open the conversation)

1. What is the best thing anyone ever said to you before a big goodbye, a deployment, a move, a deathbed, a graduation? Why did it hold?
2. Has something painful in your life ever turned out, honestly, to be to your advantage? How long did it take to see it?

Transition: Judas is in the night, the cross is hours away, and Jesus spends his last free evening not defending himself but furnishing his friends for the time after. Tonight we inherit the furniture.

Build (inductive discovery)

Have someone read John 14:1-7 aloud. Then ask:

Question 1. Let not your hearts be troubled: whose word is troubled in this Gospel, and what does it mean that he now hands the verb to them? Then Thomas, honest as ever, admits they do not know the way, and receives the sixth great I AM. Read 14:6 aloud and collect a debt: in Session 5 we argued something about what the truth is in this Gospel. What receipt did Jesus just sign?

ANSWER: share after the discussion

Troubled is Jesus' own recent biography: deeply troubled at Lazarus' tomb (11:33), now is my soul troubled (12:27), troubled in spirit over the betrayer (13:21). He has carried the trouble through, and now hands them the release: let not your hearts be. Then 14:6, the sixth predicate for the board: I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father, but by me. The Session 5 receipt: we pressed then that in John the truth is not a proposition but a person, and here it is from his own mouth. And the way is likewise not directions but a road that is alive: Christianity does not primarily hand out maps; it carries passengers. St. Catherine of Siena saw it as the Bridge flung across a flood no one can swim: the exclusivity of 14:6 is not narrowness but architecture, the only span there is, built at the builder's expense.

Question 2. Read 14:8-17. Philip asks for the one thing that would settle everything: show us the Father. Weigh the answer. Then the first of four promises: what, or who, is a Paraklētōs, and press on the small word another in verse 16: another Advocate besides whom, and which text tells us who the first one is?

ANSWER: share after the discussion

He who has seen me has seen the Father: the answer to show us the Father is that the showing has been standing in front of Philip for three years, which is the Prologue's claim (1:18) in the second person. Paraklētōs is a courtroom word: one called alongside, the advocate who stands with you

when you stand accused, counselor and comforter in one. And *allos* means another: another Advocate alongside the one they have known, and 1 John 2:1 names that first Advocate, Jesus Christ the righteous. The Spirit is not a lesser substitute or a vague influence; he is Advocate as Jesus is Advocate, with you for ever, dwelling with you, and, the promise deepens, in you.

Question 3. Read 14:18-24, and bring the board. I will not leave you orphans. Then verse 23: what do the Father and Son promise to do with the one who loves and keeps the word? The Greek noun there, *monē*, home, dwelling, is the singular of the many rooms of 14:2. Now trace our oldest architectural thread out loud: where has the dwelling of God been, station by station, since Session 1, and where has it just arrived?

ANSWER: share after the discussion

We will come to him and make our home with him. Trace it on the board and let the group say the stations: the Word pitched his tent among us (1:14); Jesus stands in Bethel's place, house of God and gate of heaven (1:51); the temple of his body (2:21); worship relocated into that body (chapter 4); and now, the final move: the dwelling widens from his body into every believer who loves him and keeps his word. Tent, ladder, temple, you. The indwelling of the Blessed Trinity in the soul in grace, the doctrine the mystics never stopped singing, is this verse, and it is not a metaphor: the same God whose glory filled the tabernacle so thickly Moses could not enter proposes to make his home in the people at this table. Give the arrow its silence.

Question 4. Read 14:25-27. The second promise, verse 26, carries the weight of your whole Bible: read it twice and name its two verbs. What does each one guarantee, and to whom must the second one, at minimum, apply? Then verse 27: where does the Church place these words, lightly adapted, at every Mass?

ANSWER: share after the discussion

He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all that I have said to you. Teaching: the Spirit will lead deeper into what was given. Reminding: the Spirit will guard the memory of what Jesus actually said, and notice the minimum condition: you can only be reminded of what you once heard, so the promise as stated belongs first to the men in that room, the eyewitnesses, and it is the reason the Church has ever trusted that the Gospels, written decades later, carry the authentic memory: the remembering was underwritten by God the Holy Spirit. Hold this; the steelman is next, and this observation is load-bearing. And verse 27, peace I leave with you, my peace I give to you: the Church sets these words on the priest's lips at Mass, moments before Communion, in the Missal's adapted wording: Lord Jesus Christ, who said to your Apostles: Peace I leave you, my peace I give you. Your group has been praying this chapter weekly since childhood without knowing its address; now they know.

Steelman: The Spirit Will Guide You • But Who Is You?

BUILD THE STEELMAN FIRST: present this at full strength

Here is the reading much of Protestantism builds on these promises, and it deserves full strength. The Spirit of truth dwells with you, and will be in you (14:17): in you, in every believer, for the Spirit

is given to all the baptized, not to a caste. So when Jesus promises he will teach you all things (14:26) and he will guide you into all truth (16:13), the you, the argument runs, is every Christian with an open Bible and a willing heart. St. John himself seems to say so elsewhere: you have been anointed by the Holy One... you have no need that any one should teach you (1 John 2:27). On this reading, the individual believer, Spirit-indwelt, reading the Spirit-inspired Scriptures, needs no magisterium standing between the soul and the truth; claiming these promises for a hierarchy clericalizes a gift poured out on the whole Church at Pentecost, and quenches the priesthood of all believers. And take the position in its strongest form, not its loosest: almost no serious Protestant claims that each Christian is his own infallible interpreter. The magisterial traditions keep ordained pastors, synods and councils, catechisms and binding confessions of faith, and they read Scripture in and with the Church, not in a vacuum. Their claim is narrower and harder to answer: that Scripture alone is the norm which cannot fail, that every human teaching office is real but fallible and therefore always reformable, and that the Spirit promised in this room ordinarily illumines believers through those ordinary means rather than around them. It is a reading with real texts, real piety, and five hundred years of sincere practice behind it. Let it stand tall.

Question 5 (press from the text). Four probes. First, the address: who, literally, is in the room when every one of these promises is spoken, and what does the reminding promise (14:26) require that only they possess? Second, grant the truth in the steelman: is the Spirit in fact given to every believer, and does the Catholic Church deny it? Third, 1 John 2:27: what is John doing in the very act of writing that sentence, and against whom, in context, is it aimed? Fourth, the test of fruit: what has five centuries of the principle that no teaching office is finally binding actually produced, and can the Spirit of truth be its author?

ANSWER: share after the discussion

First, the address: the upper room holds the Eleven. Every promise is spoken to the apostolic band on their commissioning night, and the reminding promise is the proof of the addressee: bring to your remembrance all that I have said to you can be fulfilled only in men who heard him say it. We were not there; we cannot be reminded of the Bread of Life discourse, we can only receive the memory of those who were, which is precisely what the Gospels are: the apostolic remembrance, underwritten by the Paraclete. The promises as stated point first to that room, and through it to the Gospels and the office that guards the memory (CCC 76-79). Second, grant it entirely: the Spirit is truly given to every believer, dwells in every state of grace, anoints the whole Church with a supernatural instinct for the faith, the *sensus fidei*; Catholicism does not ration the Spirit to a caste, and any Catholic who talks as if it does has misread his own Church. The question was never whether all receive the Spirit but whether all receive this office: the guarded memory and the guidance into all truth were covenanted to the apostolic body, whose successors keep the deposit for everyone (CCC 76-79); one Spirit, two modes of gift, the way one electricity lights every room but the grid has stewards. Third, the delicious irony of 1 John 2:27: the apostle writes you need no one to teach you in a letter that is itself teaching, by an apostle, correcting a specific error; in context the sentence disarms the secessionist false teachers offering secret upgrades, not the apostolic teaching John is at that moment exercising. A verse cannot abolish the office being used to deliver it. Fourth, the fruit test, offered without contempt for the sincere: the private-guidance principle, cut loose from binding communal authority, has produced tens of thousands of communions, each Spirit-claimed, mutually contradicting on Baptism, the Eucharist, and salvation itself, and the Spirit of

truth does not affirm contradictories. And note where the difficulty really sits: not in anyone claiming personal infallibility, which no one does, but in the fact that when every teaching authority is reformable in principle, a contradiction has no court of last appeal and simply hardens into one more communion; the Paraclete's actual promise built something sturdier: a memory that cannot be lost, kept in a body that cannot die, so that the least catechumen inherits the whole. Where the Church is, said Irenaeus, two lifetimes from this upper room, there is the Spirit of God; and where the Spirit of God is, there is the Church. The promises have an address, and the address has a door, and the door is open.

Question 6 (live discovery). Read 15:1-11. Before anything else: what predicate did the board just receive, and what number is it? Hold the ceremony, then dig. Send the group to Psalm 80:8-16, and read Isaiah 5:1-2, 7 aloud over it. Who was the vine, and how did the story go? So what is Jesus claiming with the word TRUE vine? Then the hard verses: what do 15:2 and 15:6 say can happen to branches of mine, and what does that honestly settle? And what is the refrain, ten times in eleven verses, and its Eucharistic echo?

ANSWER: share after the discussion

I am the true vine: the seventh predicate. Stop and hold the ceremony: have the group read the board aloud in order, bread of life, light of the world, the door, the good shepherd, the resurrection and the life, the way and the truth and the life, the true vine. Seven, on a tally they built themselves. Then the discovery: the vine was Israel, brought out of Egypt and planted (Psalm 80), the beloved's vineyard given every care that yielded wild grapes (Isaiah 5). True vine is therefore a staggering claim: Jesus is, in his own person, the faithful Israel the vine was always meant to be, the stock that finally bears, and we are grafted into him or we are firewood. Which is what 15:2 and 15:6 say without blinking: every branch of mine, genuinely his, genuinely in the vine, that bears no fruit is taken away, cast forth, withered, burned. Read inductively, the verses settle a live question: real union with Christ, really begun, can really be abandoned; abiding is not automatic, and once saved, always saved cannot survive this vineyard. The remedy is the refrain, *menō*, abide, remain, dwell, ten times, the very word of 14:23's home: stay connected, for apart from me you can do nothing (CCC 2074), not little, nothing. And the deepest abiding this Gospel knows was named at Capernaum in the same vocabulary: he who eats my flesh and drinks my blood abides in me, and I in him (6:56; CCC 1391). St. Cyril drew the line: the Eucharist is how the sap flows. The vine has an altar.

Question 7. Read 15:12-17. Two upgrades and one inversion: what does Jesus rename his disciples, on what grounds, and what does he say about who chose whom? What does that do to the way we usually tell our own faith stories?

ANSWER: share after the discussion

No longer servants but friends, on the grounds of full disclosure: all that I have heard from my Father I have made known to you; a servant gets orders, a friend gets the reasons. Greater love has no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends, spoken about eighteen hours before doing it. And the inversion: you did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit. Every faith story we tell in the first person, I found God, I decided, I chose, is true the way a child's I climbed into the boat is true: someone was steadying the boat. Election here is not a puzzle about the damned; it is a commission for the chosen: chosen and appointed, for

fruit that abides.

Question 8. Read 15:18-27 and 16:1-4. The forecast darkens: what does Jesus promise his friends about the world, and how far does 16:2 say it will go? Then the third Paraclete promise, 15:26: read it slowly, and listen for a sentence your group recites every Sunday. What did they just find, and, one gentle note, what does whom I shall send add?

ANSWER: share after the discussion

The forecast is honest to the point of severity: if the world hates you, know that it has hated me before it hated you; a servant is not greater than his master; and 16:2 escalates aposynagōgos to its limit: whoever kills you will think he is offering service to God, a sentence the martyrs of every century, including this one, have verified. He tells them in advance so that when it comes they will not be scandalized: forewarned faith does not shatter. And 15:26: the Counselor... the Spirit of truth, who proceeds from the Father, he will bear witness to me. The Creed wakes up in their hands: who proceeds from the Father is this verse, verbatim, prayed by the group every Sunday of their lives. The gentle note: Jesus also says whom I shall send to you from the Father, the sending from the Son, which the Latin tradition confesses as who proceeds from the Father and the Son, and the Greek Fathers loved as from the Father through the Son, two lungs of one confession (CCC 245-246). One sentence of peace on a topic that once split Christendom, and move on.

Question 9. Read 16:4-15. Start with the sentence nobody in that room could have believed: it is to your advantage that I go away. How can that possibly be true? Then the fourth promise: what three things will the Paraclete convict the world of, what will he guide the apostles into, and, verse 14, what is his job description in one clause? Why does that clause matter for testing every claimed movement of the Spirit since?

ANSWER: share after the discussion

To your advantage, because the Incarnate Lord, in the economy he chose, was in one room at a time; the Spirit he sends will be in believer after believer, room after room, wherever grace is welcomed, forever, and, the hinge the group logged at Tabernacles, the Spirit waits on the glorification: if I do not go away, the Counselor will not come (16:7), the not yet of 7:39 getting its schedule. The conviction: of sin, because they do not believe; of righteousness, because Jesus goes to the Father, vindicated; of judgment, because the ruler of this world is judged, the verdict of 12:31 prosecuted in every conscience since. The guidance: he will guide you into all truth... and declare to you the things that are to come, the apostolic deposit completed and unfolded. And the job description: he will glorify me. The Spirit is Christ-centripetal: he reminds, deepens, and points at the Son, never freelances past him, which gives the Church her permanent discernment test: any spirit, movement, revelation, or enthusiasm that drifts from Christ, contradicts his remembered words, or glorifies something else, has failed the interview, whatever its energy.

Question 10. Read 16:16-33. Two treasures. First, the image of verse 21: read it slowly and log its key phrase on a familiar board line: whose hour, and what is the Hour being compared to, and what happens to the anguish afterward? Second, the discourse's last sentence, verse 33: what tense is I have overcome, and when is he saying it?

ANSWER: share after the discussion

When a woman is in travail she has sorrow, because her hour has come; but when she is delivered of the child, she no longer remembers the anguish, for joy. Log it on the Hour line: the Hour, which the board knows as appointment and as glory, is now named as labor, the anguish that is itself the mechanism of the joy, the birth-pangs the prophets promised for the age to come. Something is about to be born, and the anguish is how. Say nothing more; next session will stand a Woman beside an anguish, and the group should arrive unwarned. And 16:33: in the world you have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world, perfect tense, completed action with standing results, spoken the night before Golgotha, by a man with hours to live. The outcome is announced before the battle because 10:18 was always true: nothing tomorrow will be taken from him; all of it will be laid down. The Church has carried this sentence through every persecution since, and it has not bent.

DIG DEEPER

The Advocate in court. If the group has energy: Paraklētōs is legal vocabulary, and John means it. In the trials ahead, Jesus will stand effectively alone before Annas, Caiaphas, and Pilate. Afterward, his people will stand in courts of their own, out of the synagogues, before the world, and the promise is that they will never stand as he stood: another Advocate will be beside and within them, and the cross-examination of the world will find itself, strangely, the one convicted (16:8-11). Every martyr's calm since Stephen is this promise, kept.

Synthesis question. On his last free night, Jesus built: a road that is himself, an Advocate with four promises, a home in the believer, and a vine with an altar. In one sentence: what is he furnishing his friends for, and what does it is to your advantage that I go demand that we believe about our own era of the story?

ANSWER: share after the discussion

He is furnishing them for the time after, the whole age between his going and his coming, our age, and he furnishes it not with nostalgia but with presence: the Spirit within, the Trinity at home in the soul, the sap in the vine, the memory guarded, the peace bequeathed. And to your advantage demands the almost unbelievable: that we are not the deprived generation who missed him, born too late for the voice and the sandals; the Lord himself judged our arrangement, Spirit-indwelt, Eucharist-fed, memory-guarded, the better one. If someone says, we did not miss the story, we live in its best-furnished room, the session has landed. Now send them out with the instruction, given twice: next week is Session 13. Bring your sealed guess. Its Passover has come.

Send

1. Where in your life, name it concretely, are you a branch straining to bear fruit while functionally disconnected from the vine: prayer thin, sacraments rare, effort maximal? What would reconnection actually look like this month?
2. You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you. What in your life have you been treating as your own idea that, on reflection, has appointment written all over it?

Live It This Week

- **Vine time.** Ten minutes a day of pure abiding: no requests, no list, just remain. Sit with him the way a branch sits on a vine, silent and connected. Asking can come after; this week, practice staying.
- **Pray to the Person you neglect.** Most Catholics under-pray the Third Person the Lord spent his last night promising. Once a day: Come, Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of your faithful and kindle in them the fire of your love. Then name one situation and hand him the case; he is your Advocate.
- **Hear your chapter at Mass.** This Sunday, listen for the moment the priest prays: Lord Jesus Christ, who said to your Apostles: Peace I leave you, my peace I give you. That is John 14:27, your chapter, prayed over you. Receive the bequest consciously for once.

Closing Prayer

Leader prays aloud: Lord Jesus, true vine, way and truth and life, you spent your last free night furnishing us for this very evening: an Advocate to teach and remind, a home in us for the Father and yourself, a peace the world cannot counterfeit. We accept the furniture. Keep us on the vine; prune what you must; and let us never again say we were born too late, for you yourself called our age the advantage. In the world we will have tribulation; we are of good cheer anyway, for you have overcome the world. Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.

Scripture Memory Verse

MEMORIZE THIS WEEK: John 15:5

I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in me, and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing. (RSV2CE)

Part 3: Leader Reference Card

Every passage used or referenced in Session 12, in order of appearance. Flag these in your Bible before the session.

- **John 14:1-7** · troubled hearts, many rooms (monai), Thomas, the sixth predicate (14:6)
- **John 14:8-17** · seen me, seen the Father; first Paraclete promise; allos
- **John 14:18-24** · not orphans; make our home with him (monē, 14:23); the dwelling thread interiorizes
- **John 14:25-27** · second promise: teach and remind (14:26); peace I leave with you (the Mass)
- **1 John 2:27** · steelman text, the anointing teaches you; handled in the press
- **John 15:1-11** · the true vine, seventh predicate; airei and kathairei; 15:2 and 15:6 on perseverance; abide ten times; 15:5
- **Psalms 80:8-16** · live discovery, the vine out of Egypt
- **Isaiah 5:1-7** · read aloud, the vineyard song and the wild grapes
- **John 6:56** · cross-reference, eats my flesh abides in me; the Eucharistic abiding (CCC 1391)
- **John 15:12-17** · friends, greater love, you did not choose me
- **John 15:18-27 and 16:1-4** · the world's hatred; third promise, who proceeds from the Father (15:26); aposynagōgos to martyrdom (16:2)
- **Zechariah 13:7** · leader background, the struck shepherd behind 16:32
- **John 16:4-15** · to your advantage; fourth promise: convict, guide into all truth, he will glorify me
- **John 16:16-33** · the woman in travail, her hour (16:21); I have overcome the world (16:33)
- **Isaiah 26:17 and 66:7-14** · leader background, the birth-pangs of the age to come
- **CCC 76-79, 245-246, 1108, 1391, 2074** · Catechism connections