

THE UNVEILING

Session 9

The Beasts and the Mark

Revelation 13:1–14:5

A Fourteen-Session Inductive Study for Young Adults

Here is a call for the endurance and faith of the saints. (Revelation 13:10, RSV2CE)

Leader Preparation Guide

Session Overview

Discovery Aim. The group unmask the dragon's two agents: a beast from the sea assembled from Daniel 7's empires (state power absolutized) and a beast from the land that makes the first one worshiped (propaganda and false religion); they discover the whole system as a counterfeit of what they already know (a parody trinity, a parody death-and-resurrection, a parody seal); and they read 666 with St. Irenaeus's humility rather than the internet's confidence. The counter-image of 14:1–5 answers everything: the Lamb on Mount Zion, and foreheads bearing his name.

Catholic Touchstone. Everyone worships; and the chapter sets two rival markings before the world: the only question it presses is whose name you carry. The Church names the permanent temptation (idolatry of power and the state, CCC 2113), the final form it will take (the Antichrist's religious deception, CCC 675–676), and the standing answer: we must obey God rather than men (CCC 2242).

What You Need to Know

The dragon, beaten in heaven and furious on earth, now delegates. Chapter 13 shows his two agents; grasping their first-century referents keeps every later application honest.

The sea beast (13:1–10) rises wearing the dragon's own heraldry (seven heads, ten horns: the family resemblance is the point) and is assembled from Daniel 7, tonight's central discovery: Daniel saw four beasts from the sea (lion, bear, leopard, and a terrible ten-horned beast), four successive empires; John's one beast is all of them combined: leopard's body, bear's feet, lion's mouth. Empire concentrated. For John's first hearers the referent was unmistakable: Rome, the sea-borne power demanding what only God may have. The beast's dossier confirms it: a mouth uttering haughty and blasphemous words (Daniel 7's little horn), authority over every tribe and tongue and nation (a parody of the Lamb's ransom-list, 5:9), war on the saints, and universal worship. And one head seemed to have a mortal wound, and its mortal wound was healed (13:3; compare 13:12): a deliberate parody of the Lamb standing as though slain. (Commentators also note the first-century rumor that Nero, dead in 68, would return; present that as background commentators note, not as the key.) The beast is not only Rome: Daniel's four beasts became one because the thing recurs. Wherever state power absolutizes itself and demands the allegiance owed to God, the beast surfaces; and the Church teaches that before the end this deception reaches its supreme form before the end in the Antichrist (CCC 675–676); many Fathers and theologians expect a personal figure, though the Church has not defined the mode. Preterist, idealist, and futurist readings are all carrying real weight here; say so.

The land beast (13:11–17), later called the false prophet (16:13; 19:20), looks like a lamb and talks like the dragon: the book's most concise definition of religious counterfeit. Its work is liturgical and economic: it organizes worship of the first beast, performs validating wonders, animates the image, and controls the market: no one can buy or sell without the mark. First-century hearers knew the machinery: the imperial cult's provincial priesthoods (Asia was their heartland), emperor images, and the economic web of guilds whose feasts honored the gods (Thyatira's pressure from Session 2, now systematized). Note the counterfeit structure, a pattern many commentators recognize, which your group can build and test: dragon, beast, false prophet aping Father, Son, and prophetic Spirit; a healed death-wound aping the Resurrection; a mark on hand and forehead aping the seal of God's servants (7:3) and the ancient command to bind God's word on the hand and as frontlets between the eyes (Deuteronomy 6:8: deed and thought). Evil in this book creates nothing of its own; it corrupts and counterfeits.

On 666 (13:18): the text calls for wisdom, not a decoder ring. Give the honest scholarly picture: letters served as numerals in Hebrew and Greek (gematria), and the leading modern reading notes that Nero Caesar, written in Hebrew letters, totals 666, with the striking support that some ancient manuscripts

read 616, which matches the same name spelled without the final letter. Present this as the leading scholarly reading, valuable because it anchors the chapter in real history, not as Church teaching; the Church has defined nothing here. Alongside it, an old and edifying observation: six falls short of seven, the book's number of completeness, and here it falls short three times: it is, the text says, a human number, humanity absolutizing itself and always failing to be God. What is not permitted is the perennial parlor game of pinning 666 on the era's villains; St. Irenaeus, two generations from John, weighed candidate names himself and then counseled against deciding (see his Voice below).

Then lift your eyes (14:1–5): the Lamb standing on Mount Zion (Psalm 2:6: I have set my king on Zion), and with him the 144,000 (Session 6's sealed people), foreheads bearing his name and his Father's name. There is the answer to the mark: God's people were marked first. They sing a new song no one else can learn, and they follow the Lamb wherever he goes. On 14:4's startling description (not defiled themselves with women... chaste): state first that marriage is not defiling (Hebrews 13:4), then read it within the book's own idiom, where the great sin is figured as fornication with idols and Babylon the harlot (coming in Session 12), so the celibate-warrior image describes covenant fidelity: an army that never touched the enemy's cult. Many also hear in it a real honoring of consecrated virginity, which the Church cherishes; both notes can sound together, and neither reads 14:4 as disdain for marriage, which this book will crown with a wedding feast.

Pastoral note. This chapter attracts conspiracy anxiety like no other Scripture. Two ditches to steer between: cynicism that finds the beast quaint, and panic that finds him in every barcode. The text's own pastoral word appears twice, and it is neither: Here is a call for the endurance and faith of the saints (13:10; compare 14:12). If someone in your group is genuinely frightened of accidentally taking the mark, give them the text's comfort directly: Revelation ties the mark to worship of the beast (13:12, 15–16; explicitly at 14:9–11, 16:2, 19:20, 20:4): allegiance is its meaning, and no one is damned by a barcode, a chip, or a mistake. The Church's teaching on culpability requires knowledge and consent; the beast trades in exactly those, and so does the Lamb.

Old Testament Roots and Fulfillment

- Daniel 7:2–8, 21, 25: four beasts from the sea, the ten horns, the boastful little horn, war on the saints, and the time, two times, and half a time. Tonight's central discovery: John's beast is Daniel's four in one.
- Deuteronomy 6:4–8: bind God's words as a sign upon your hand and as frontlets between your eyes: allegiance written on deed and thought. The mark on hand and forehead (13:16) is its dark parody. Discovery passage tonight.
- Psalm 2:6: I have set my king on Zion, my holy hill: the ground under the Lamb's feet in 14:1.
- Exodus 20:2–5 and Daniel 3: the first commandment, and the furnace-tested refusal of Daniel's three friends to worship the golden image: the spiritual ancestry of everyone who refuses the beast.
- 1 Kings 18:20–39 with Deuteronomy 13:1–3: Elijah's authentic fire from heaven, which the land beast counterfeits (13:13–14); and Moses's rule that even a successful sign proves nothing if it leads to other gods.

VOICES OF THE CHURCH

VOICE OF THE CHURCH

St. Irenaeus of Lyons · *Against Heresies*, Book 5

Writing within living memory of John's circle, St. Irenaeus discusses the number 666, notes that it stands in the ancient and approved copies, considers candidate names of the era (Lateinos and Teitan among them), and then warns against asserting any: it is safer and less presumptuous, he

teaches in substance, to await the fulfillment than to decide on a name, for if it were needful that the name be openly proclaimed in his own day, it would have been announced by the one who saw the vision. The Church's earliest commentary on 666 is a warning label against the very cottage industry that thrives on it.

VOICE OF THE CHURCH

St. Augustine · *City of God, Book 14*

Two loves have built two cities: love of self, reaching contempt of God, built the earthly city; love of God, reaching contempt of self, built the heavenly one. For this study's application, Augustine's famous sentence maps tonight's chapter: the beast's empire and the Lamb's Zion are not two places on a map but two loves contending for every heart, in every age, including inside the baptized.

VOICE OF THE CHURCH

St. Justin Martyr · *First Apology (summary)*

St. Justin told the emperor, in substance: we worship God alone, but in all else we gladly serve you, paying taxes and praying for kings, acknowledging your authority while refusing you our adoration. It is the exact line the beast erases and the martyrs died on: everything lawful to Caesar, nothing of God's. Christians are not anarchists; they are people who know what worship is.

Catechism Connection

- CCC 675–676: the Church's final trial: a religious deception offering apparent solutions at the price of apostasy from the truth, its supreme form the Antichrist's pseudo-messianism, man glorifying himself in place of God; and the Church's rejection of secular messianism in every form. The doctrine of chapter 13 without the imagery.
- CCC 2113: idolatry names divinizing what is not God, and the Catechism's own list includes power and the state. The beast is not exotic; he is on the Catechism's shortlist of everyday idols.
- CCC 2242: the citizen is obliged in conscience not to follow civil directives contrary to the moral order: we must obey God rather than men. The charter of every martyr in this chapter.
- CCC 1090: in the earthly liturgy we take part in a foretaste of the heavenly liturgy celebrated in the holy city toward which we journey. The doctrinal center of the Assembly; presented only there.
- CCC 1137–1139: the paragraphs held in silence since Sessions 1 and 4: the Catechism reads Revelation 4–5 as the liturgy celebrated by the whole Christ, head and body. Tonight the silence ends.
- CCC 1326: by the Eucharistic celebration we already unite ourselves with the heavenly liturgy and anticipate eternal life. One sentence, the whole reveal.
- CCC 1366–1367: the Eucharist makes present the one sacrifice of the cross and does not repeat it; the victim is one and the same. The precision that keeps the Assembly orthodox and lets it stay glorious.

THREAD WATCH (LEADER ONLY)

Counterfeit thread planted and named tonight: parody trinity, parody resurrection (mortal wound healed), parody seal (the mark), parody universality. It pays off in Session 12 (Babylon as anti-Bride) and resolves when the true versions arrive (the Bride, Sessions 13–14). Let the group build the counterfeit list themselves in Question 4.

Seal versus mark: connect explicitly back to Session 6 (7:3) and forward: foreheads reappear at 22:4 (his name shall be on their foreheads). Do not cite 22:4 to the group yet.

Seven heads and ten horns from 12:3 now explained as far as the text explains them; the heads get counted in Session 12 (17:9–11). If asked tonight: three weeks.

Endurance refrain (13:10; taken up again at 14:12, next session's text) is the chapter's pastoral spine, with 13:18's call for wisdom as its partner; say it aloud at least twice.

How long? thread: the beast's war on the saints (13:7) is the machinery the martyrs' prayer is about; one sentence connecting them keeps the threads braided.

FURNITURE OF HEAVEN SPEAKS TONIGHT: your private list retires, in glory. The final thirty minutes are ring-fenced for the Assembly: the group builds the inventory, says the discovery themselves, and only then hears the Church confirm it. From next session forward the observations continue in the open; the thread converts from secret to shared lens.

SECOND SEAL OPENS TONIGHT: bring every My Sunday Guess slip. They open during the Assembly, after the group has said the discovery aloud, never before. Read each with honor; the point is not who guessed right but that everyone was already circling the truth. Return the slips as keepsakes.

Session Goals

1. The group assembles the sea beast from Daniel 7 by opening the passage.
2. The group discovers the counterfeit structure (trinity, resurrection, seal, universality) themselves.
3. The group can give the honest account of 666: the leading Nero reading, the falling-short-of-seven observation, and St. Irenaeus's warning.
4. The group can state where lawful citizenship ends and idolatry begins (Justin's line; CCC 2242).
5. Each participant identifies one place the beast's economy currently prices their allegiance, and one act of endurance for the week.
6. The Assembly succeeds: the group says the discovery themselves before any authority is quoted.
7. The Sunday seals are opened, read, and honored.
8. The once-for-all precision lands inside the joy: participation, not repetition.

Timed Plan (75–90 minutes)

- Opening prayer: 5 min
- Win questions: 10 min
- Build (13:1–14:5, with discovery passages): 35–40 min
- The Assembly (ring-fenced; see Discussion Guide): 30 min
- Send questions, Live It This Week, memory verse, closing prayer, distribute Take-Home 9: 10–12 min

Pre-chosen cuts if time runs short: drop the Dig Deeper box, then give the 666 material (Question 5) as a five-minute presentation, then compress the second-beast question. Never shave a minute from the Assembly; if 666 speculation runs hot, name the parking lot and move: the Assembly outranks everything.

Discussion Guide

Opening Prayer

Leader: Lord God, you alone are worthy of worship. Give us tonight the wisdom your word calls for: to recognize every counterfeit, to render what is lawful and refuse what is not, and to stand with the Lamb on Mount Zion bearing your name on our minds and your work in our hands. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Win

1. What is the best counterfeit you have ever encountered: a fake product, profile, or offer that almost fooled you? What finally gave it away?
2. Where do you feel the strongest pull to trade a piece of conviction for belonging, advancement, or access? (Categories are enough; no confessions required.)

Build

Read Revelation 13:1–10 aloud.

3. This beast has a family tree. Discovery: open Daniel 7:2–8 and 7:21, 25. What did Daniel see, what did his beasts represent, and what has John done with them? What, then, is the sea beast, both for John's first hearers and for every age since?

ANSWER · share after the discussion

Daniel saw four beasts rise from the sea: a lion, a bear, a leopard, and a ten-horned terror with a boastful little horn that made war on the saints: four successive empires under judgment. John's single beast has the leopard's body, the bear's feet, the lion's mouth, and the ten horns: Daniel's four in one. Empire, concentrated and unmasked. For the first hearers this wore Rome's face: the sea-borne power whose cult demanded worship and whose sword took the saints (the blasphemous mouth, the war on the saints, and the forty-two months all check Daniel's boxes). And because John fused all Daniel's beasts into one, the figure outruns Rome by design: wherever political power absolutizes itself and bids for the allegiance owed to God, the beast has surfaced again, and the Church teaches that this deception reaches its supreme form in the Antichrist before the end (CCC 675–676; a personal figure, in the common expectation of Fathers and theologians). First century, every century, last days: the approaches from Session 1 are all on duty in this chapter, and honestly so.

4. Look at 13:3–4: one of the beast's heads seemed to have a mortal wound, and its mortal wound was healed, and the world worships. Where have we met a slain-yet-standing figure before, and what is the text telling us about how evil operates?

ANSWER · share after the discussion

The Lamb standing, as though it had been slain (5:6). The beast's healed death-wound is a deliberate parody of the death and Resurrection of Christ, complete with the world's awed doxology (who is like the beast? mimics the very shape of biblical praise: who is like thee, O LORD?, Exodus 15:11). Keep this discovery; the whole chapter runs on it: evil in Revelation creates nothing of its own: it corrupts and counterfeits what God has already done. That is both a warning (expect the counterfeit to look uncannily like the real) and a strange comfort (the devil is a plagiarist, not an author; even his best material is stolen from the gospel).

Read Revelation 13:11–17 aloud.

5. The second beast looks like a lamb and speaks like a dragon (13:11). What does it actually do (list its works from 13:12–17), and what real first-century machinery was John’s audience looking at? Now assemble the whole counterfeit: dragon, sea beast, land beast, wound, mark. What is each aping?

ANSWER · share after the discussion

Its works are religious marketing for the first beast: it organizes worship, performs validating wonders (fire from heaven: Elijah’s authentic sign, counterfeited; and Deuteronomy 13:1–3 already ruled that a sign which leads to other gods condemns its worker, however well it works), erects and animates the image, and enforces it economically: no buying or selling without the mark. John’s hearers knew the machinery personally: the imperial cult’s provincial priesthods (Asia Minor was their showcase), the emperor’s images, and the guild economy where feast attendance commonly pressed on a livelihood (Thyatira’s pressure from Session 2, now made a system). (The famous certificates of sacrifice belong to the later Decian persecution; the first-century squeeze ran through cult and commerce.) Later the book will simply call this figure the false prophet.

Now the counterfeit pattern many commentators recognize, which your group should assemble aloud and test: dragon, beast, and false prophet aping Father, Son, and the prophetic Spirit; the healed wound aping the Resurrection; authority over every tribe and tongue aping the Lamb’s ransom of every tribe and tongue (5:9); and the mark on right hand or forehead aping both the seal of God’s servants (7:3) and Deuteronomy 6:8, where God’s word is bound on the hand and as frontlets between the eyes: what you do and what you think, marked for God (Revelation’s forehead echoes the frontlets). (Open Deuteronomy 6:4–8 now as the discovery.) The book sets two rival markings before every reader; the question is whose you bear.

6. Verse 18 says: This calls for wisdom. Give the group the honest state of the question on 666, in three layers: the leading historical reading, the symbolic observation, and the oldest patristic advice. (Leader: present, then discuss which layer the group finds most illuminating and why.)

ANSWER · share after the discussion

Layer one, the leading scholarly reading: ancient letters doubled as numerals, and Nero Caesar written in Hebrew letters totals 666; strikingly, some ancient manuscripts read 616 instead, which is what the same name totals in a variant spelling. That reading anchors the number in the persecutor John’s hearers knew. Hold it as strong scholarship, not doctrine; the Church has defined nothing here. Layer two, the symbolic observation: six falls short of seven, this book’s number of fullness, and falls short three times over: it is a human number (13:18), humanity inflating itself toward godhood and always failing to arrive. Layers one and two agree happily: Nero was exactly that. Layer three, the oldest advice: St. Irenaeus, two generations from John, knew the number, weighed candidate names himself, and then counseled leaving the identification to the fulfillment: better to wait humbly than to assert rashly. One of the earliest surviving Christian discussions of 666 ends in a warning against 666 industries. Every generation’s attempt to pin the number on its villains has embarrassed itself; wisdom here looks like Irenaeus.

Read Revelation 14:1–5 aloud.

7. After two beasts, look up. Who stands where (Psalm 2:6 is the address), who is with him, and what is on their foreheads? What does this scene answer, and what do you make of the description in 14:4?

ANSWER · share after the discussion

The Lamb stands on Mount Zion (I have set my king on Zion, Psalm 2:6: the coronation the nations raged against, accomplished), and with him the 144,000 of Session 6: the sealed people, foreheads bearing his name and his Father’s name. That is the answer to the mark: God marked his people

first, and the beast's brand is the forgery, not the original. They sing a song only the redeemed can learn, and their whole rule of life is one clause: these follow the Lamb wherever he goes.

On 14:4 (it is these who have not defiled themselves with women, for they are chaste): read the whole clause, say plainly what Scripture says elsewhere: marriage and the marriage bed are honorable and undefiled (Hebrews 13:4): then read it in the book's own idiom, where the great infidelity is figured as fornication with idols and, shortly, with Babylon the harlot: this is covenant-faithfulness language: an army on holy-war footing that never once visited the enemy's shrines. Many also hear a genuine honoring of consecrated virginity, which the Church cherishes as a real vocation; both senses can sound together. What it is not is disdain for marriage: this book is racing toward a wedding.

BUILD, THEN PRESS: IS THE MARK A COMING TECHNOLOGY?

Present this at full strength before answering. Many sincere Christians argue: the text is concrete: a mark on the right hand or the forehead, without which no one can buy or sell. For the first time in history, implantable chips, digital IDs, and cashless systems make that literally feasible. Surely faithfulness means watching for the technology, warning others, and refusing it at any cost; and surely a chapter this specific about buying and selling means the mark will be an actual object, and taking it, even under pressure, means damnation (14:9–11 says so).

8. What is right in that vigilance? And what do the text and the Church's teaching correct in it?

ANSWER · share after the discussion

What is right: the economic squeeze is real in the text, and it is not paranoid to notice that systems of commerce can become systems of coercion; Christians have faced exactly that, from guild feasts to party membership, and may again. The refusal to purchase belonging at the price of worship is the chapter's command, and the willingness to lose money for Christ is non-negotiable discipleship.

What needs correcting: the mark parodies the seal of God (7:3) and the binding of God's word on the hand and as frontlets between the eyes (Deuteronomy 6:8): God's seal is covenantal allegiance, often understood in baptismal terms, showing in thought and deed, and a parody need not share its counterpart's physical form to share its meaning. What the text fixes is the mark's meaning: allegiance to the beast, expressed in worship and enforced through economics (13:12, 15–16; joined explicitly to worship at 14:9–11; 16:2; 19:20; 20:4). The Church has identified no technology as the mark, and none can be identified as it from its features alone; and the fear of unwitting damnation gets both the text and Catholic moral teaching wrong: mortal culpability requires knowledge and full consent (and 14:9–11's warning falls on conscious worshipers of the beast). A Christian could carry every technology on earth and be unmarked, and a Christian with no devices at all could bear the mark in full, by bowing to power for the sake of buying and selling. Watch, then: but watch your worship, not your wallet's hardware. And the positive command outlasts every technological guess: endurance and faith, following the Lamb wherever he goes.

DIG DEEPER

Daniel 3 as the counter-liturgy. The land beast's animated image, commanding worship on pain of death, has an ancestor: Nebuchadnezzar's golden image, the music cue, and the furnace. Read Daniel 3:16–18 this week and notice the three friends' answer: our God is able to deliver us; but if not, we will not serve your gods. That but if not is the whole spirituality of Revelation 13: faithfulness not contingent on rescue. The Church has read Daniel and Revelation as one syllabus on martyrdom from the beginning.

The Assembly

9. Leader: We have spent tonight with a counterfeit liturgy: a mock throne, a mock resurrection, a mock seal, a mock acclamation. Forgers only copy currency that is real. Before we close, ring-fence what remains of the evening for a different kind of question about the real thing.
10. For nine sessions we have kept company with this book. Name everything we have met in it that you would also find inside a Catholic church on a Sunday morning. Call them out; we will build the list together.

ANSWER • SHARE AFTER THE DISCUSSION

Capture the group's list first, then fill every gap from your private Furniture of Heaven list: the Lord's Day; the seven golden lampstands; the long robe and golden sash; a kingdom of priests; the Amen; the hidden manna; white garments; the meal at the door (3:20); Holy, holy, holy; the elders in white casting their crowns; the prostrations; the golden bowls of incense, which are the prayers of the saints; the Lamb standing as though slain; Worthy is the Lamb; the new song; the altar and the souls beneath it; the seal on the forehead; the palms; the acclamations; the half hour of silence; the golden censer; the scroll taken and eaten; the temple; and, last week, the ark of the covenant. Let the length of the list do its own arguing.

11. Look at the list we just made. Where has this book had us standing since Session 1?

ANSWER • SHARE AFTER THE DISCUSSION

Let the group say it before you do, in their own words: inside the Mass; inside the worship of heaven that the Mass enters. Honor every phrasing that lands near it, and do not correct toward a formula. Only after they have said it, confirm it: John's vision is saturated with the worship of the Church because what John saw is what the Church's worship enters. The discovery belongs to them tonight; your nine weeks of silence just paid for themselves.

12. Open the second seal. Bring out every My Sunday Guess and read each aloud with honor. The point is not who guessed right but that everyone was already circling the truth. Return the slips as keepsakes.
13. Now, and only now, the Church in her own voice:

VOICE OF THE CHURCH

St. Cyril of Jerusalem • Mystagogical Catecheses (summary)

Teaching the newly baptized about the Mass in fourth-century Jerusalem, St. Cyril explains, in substance, that when the Church sings the thrice-holy hymn she is deliberately joining her voice to the seraphim and the hosts of heaven, so that earth's worship and heaven's become one act of praise. Read only after the group has said the discovery themselves.

VOICE OF THE CHURCH

St. John Chrysostom • On the Priesthood (summary)

St. John Chrysostom teaches, in substance, that at the celebration of the sacred mysteries the sanctuary is thronged with angels honoring the One who lies upon the altar, and that the worship offered there is a share in the worship of heaven. What John saw through an open door, the Church enters through an open sanctuary.

VOICE OF THE CHURCH

The Second Vatican Council · Sacrosanctum Concilium 8

The Council teaches that in the earthly liturgy we take part in a foretaste of the heavenly liturgy celebrated in the holy city toward which we journey as pilgrims, where Christ is minister of the sanctuary; with the whole company of heaven we sing a hymn of glory to the Lord. The Council states as doctrine what the group has just assembled as inventory (CCC 1090; 1137–1139; 1326).

14. One precision, inside the joy. The Catechism teaches that the Eucharist makes present the one sacrifice of the cross; it does not repeat it (CCC 1366–1367). Why does that distinction make tonight's discovery greater rather than smaller?

ANSWER · SHARE AFTER THE DISCUSSION

Because participation outranks repetition. If each Mass repeated Calvary, Calvary would have been insufficient. Because the sacrifice is once for all, every Mass is that one offering made sacramentally present, and the congregation at the smallest weekday Mass stands where John stood: before the throne, before the Lamb standing as though slain. The discovery is not that the Mass resembles heaven. It is that heaven is where the Mass happens.

15. Leader: from tonight the list is open; we collect the liturgical observations together, out loud, for the rest of the study. The wedding this liturgy feeds waits four sessions ahead; do not preview it.

Send

16. Where does the beast's economy currently price your allegiance: a room where faith costs status, a job where conscience costs money, a platform where truth costs followers? Name one, at whatever level of privacy you need.
17. These follow the Lamb wherever he goes (14:4). Where, concretely, is the Lamb currently going that you have been declining to follow?

Live It This Week

- Do one act of costly allegiance this week: the place you named in the Send questions. Small and real beats large and imaginary.
- This Sunday, attend Mass with tonight's inventory in mind, from the sign of the cross to the final blessing. Count what you now recognize, and thank God for one item by name.
- Read Daniel 3:16–18 once, and pray the three friends' compressed motto, drawn from Daniel 3:18, over your situation: but if not, we will not serve.
- Read Revelation 14:6–20 for next session.
- Memorize the memory verse below.

Memory Verse

Here is a call for the endurance and faith of the saints. (Revelation 13:10, RSV2CE)

Closing Prayer

Leader: Lord, you have set your King on Zion, your holy hill, and your name on your people. Keep us from every counterfeit: unbought, unbranded, unafraid. When belonging is priced, give us endurance; when wonders deceive, give us wisdom; and keep our feet behind the Lamb, wherever he goes. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Distribute Take-Home 9 as people leave.

Leader Reference Card

Every passage used in Session 9, in order:

- Revelation 13:1–10 (read aloud)
- Daniel 7:2–8, 21, 25 (discovery)
- Exodus 15:11 (leader background, who is like)
- Revelation 13:11–17 (read aloud)
- Deuteronomy 6:4–8 (discovery)
- 1 Kings 18:20–39 (leader background, Carmel)
- Revelation 13:18 (leader presentation on 666)
- Revelation 14:1–5 (read aloud)
- Psalm 2:6 (verification in discussion)
- Daniel 3:16–18 (Dig Deeper and Live It This Week)
- The Assembly: the Furniture of Heaven inventory; CCC 1090, 1137–1139, 1326, 1366–1367 (leader presentation after the group speaks)
- Memory verse: Revelation 13:10