

Session 14: The Bride and the New Jerusalem

What We Found

The ending's decisive image moves in one direction: down. The holy city comes down out of heaven from God: not our escape from creation but God's arrival to renew it: a new heaven and a new earth, the universe itself renewed (CCC 1042–1047). The covenant's oldest refrain arrives home: the dwelling of God is with men (the tabernacle word: God tents with his people forever), and the tenderest sentence in Scripture is delivered: he will wipe away every tear from their eyes; death shall be no more. The city measures as a cube, and Scripture's clearest other cube is the Holy of Holies (1 Kings 6:20): the shape strongly suggests the whole city as inner sanctuary, and the text gives the reason there is no temple: its temple is the Lord God the Almighty and the Lamb. Twelve gates for the tribes, twelve foundations for the apostles: Israel and the Church, one city, gates never shut, the nations walking by its light (Isaiah 60 fulfilled). Eden reopens: Ezekiel's temple river transformed, flowing now from the throne; the tree of life restored with leaves for the healing of the nations, nothing accursed: and the summit of the whole Bible: they shall see his face: the beatific vision (CCC 1023, 1028), his name on their foreheads: the seal, arrived. The morning star promised in Session 2 is decoded: it is Christ himself; every promise in the seven letters is fulfilled in and through him. And the Bible ends not with a period but a dialogue whose longing the Church makes her own at every Mass: The Spirit and the Bride say, Come... Amen. Come, Lord Jesus!

VOICES OF THE CHURCH

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St. Irenaeus of Lyons · *Against Heresies, Book 4*

The glory of God is living man; and the life of man is the vision of God. Revelation 22:4 in doctrinal form: the whole city is built for that seeing.

VOICE OF THE CHURCH

St. Augustine · *City of God, Book 22*

There we shall rest and see, see and love, love and praise. Behold what shall be in the end without end. Not unending drudgery: loving praise that never exhausts its Beloved.

VOICE OF THE CHURCH

St. Thérèse of Lisieux · *Story of a Soul*

Searching Scripture for her place in the Church, St. Thérèse found it: in the heart of the Church, my Mother, I shall be love. A hidden life of love is citizenship in the city.

Live It (and after)

- Pray Come, Lord Jesus once each day, and mean it at Mass as this book's closing prayer.
- Read Genesis 1–3 and Revelation 20–22 side by side once this month: the Bible's bookends: the garden becoming the city, at the price of the Lamb.
- Pass it on: invite someone to the next group, or lead one. Blessed is he who reads aloud (Revelation 1:3): you are now equipped to be that reader.

Memory Verse

And he who sat upon the throne said, "Behold, I make all things new." (Revelation 21:5, RSV2CE)

The Study Is Complete

You have now received fourteen memory verses to keep, pray, and give away: the First and the Last who holds the keys; be faithful unto death; the knock at the door; worthy is the Lamb; tribulation overcome; the Shepherd who wipes away tears; the kingdom announced; conquering by the blood of the Lamb; the endurance of the saints; blessed are the dead who die in the Lord; the song of the King of the ages; come out of her, my people; the marriage supper; and all things made new. The Spirit and the Bride say: Come.

Catechism references from this session: CCC 756–757; 1023–1029; 1042–1047; 1130; 2817.