

The Woman: Take-Home 2

Session 2: The New Eve

What We Found

St. Paul frames all of salvation as a replay: Christ is the New Adam whose obedience undoes the first man's disobedience (Romans 5:18–19; 1 Corinthians 15:21–22, 45).

St. John's Gospel opens 'In the beginning' (John 1:1) and twice shows Jesus addressing his mother as 'Woman' (John 2:4; 19:26), pointing us back to Genesis 3:15, where God sets 'the woman' and her seed in enmity with the serpent, and her seed shall bruise his head.

The scene of the fall inverts in the Annunciation: a virgin, an angel's word, and free consent. Eve's distrust tied the knot; Mary's 'let it be to me according to your word' (Luke 1:38) begins its untying. This is the earliest developed Marian teaching we have outside the New Testament, taught by St. Justin Martyr around 155 and St. Irenaeus around 180.

Voices of the Church

VOICE OF THE CHURCH: ST. JUSTIN MARTYR

Justin teaches that as the virgin Eve conceived the serpent's word and brought forth disobedience and death, so the Virgin Mary received the angel's good news with faith and answered, be it done to me according to your word.

Dialogue with Trypho, ch. 100 (paraphrase)

VOICE OF THE CHURCH: ST. IRENAEUS OF LYONS

"The knot of Eve's disobedience was untied by Mary's obedience: what the virgin Eve bound through her disbelief, Mary loosened by her faith."

Against Heresies III, 22, 4 (as cited in CCC 494)

VOICE OF THE CHURCH: ST. JOHN HENRY NEWMAN

Newman argues, in substance, that because the earliest Fathers teach the New Eve independently across the whole ancient Church, it belongs to the primitive apostolic teaching rather than to later devotion.

Letter to Pusey (1866), summary

Live It This Week

- Each morning, pray 'let it be to me according to your word' (Luke 1:38) over the first difficult thing on the day's calendar.
- Reread Genesis 3 slowly and write down one question it raises; bring it next week.
- Make one small deliberate act of obedience in an area where you have been negotiating with God.

SCRIPTURE MEMORY VERSE

"I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your seed and her seed; he shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise his heel."

Genesis 3:15 (RSV2CE)

Before next session: Read Luke 1:5–56 slowly, twice, and notice every detail of movement and place.

Catechism references: CCC 410–411; 494; 511; 726