

How To Read the Bible

By Dcn. Adam Salter Gosnell

If the Bible and I had a relationship status on Facebook, it would be "It's complicated."

Okay so, yes, on the one hand, the Bible is God's word to us. Yes, it is a treasure that "excelleth all the riches of the earth" (from the Preface to the King James Translation). Yes, the lector finishes the reading and says, "The Word of the Lord," and we (me included) respond, "Thanks be to God."

But on the other hand, the Bible is a terribly frustrating book. For example, since I've become an Anglican I've been reading a lot of Psalms (because apparently Morning and Evening Prayer are a thing). And you wouldn't believe (or maybe you would) how much of the time I read passages like this one:

I pursued my enemies and overtook them, and did not turn back till they were consumed. / I thrust them through, so that they were not able to rise; they fell under my feet.... those who hated me I destroyed. / They cried for help, but there was none to save; they cried to the Lord, but he did not answer them. / I beat them fine as dust before the wind; I cast them out like the mire of the streets" (Ps 18:37-38, 40b-42).

And my response is less like, "The Word of the Lord," and more like, "The Word of the Lord?"

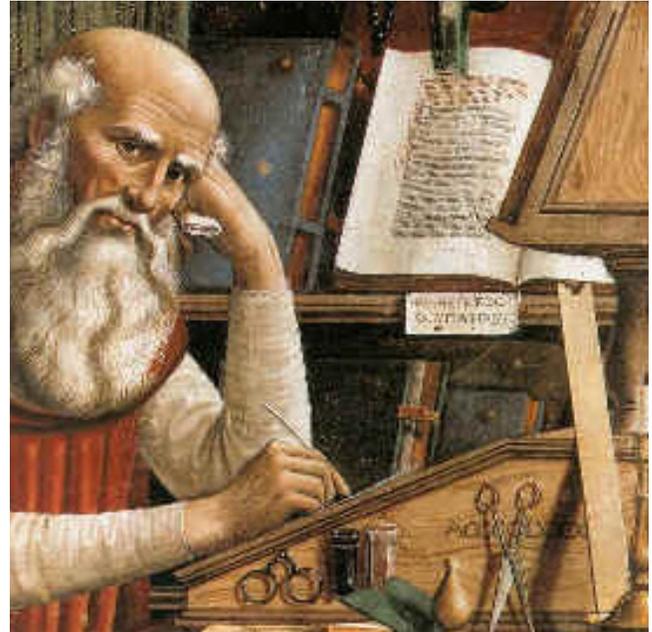
Today at CTR



FORUM SERIES: 10:00 a.m. in the Parish Hall: *I See Satan Fall Like Lightning.* Book discussion with Fr. Tim.
10:00 a.m. in the Baptistry: How to Read the Bible, with Dcn. Adam.

UGANDA MISSION TRIP INFORMATIONAL MEETING: 1p.m. in the Baptistry. Frs Tim and Malcom discuss the upcoming group mission trip to Uganda taking place in October.

THE ANCHOR: Junior High Youth group today at the Keifer home, from 2-4pm. Snacks, games, Bible Study. Contact Fr. Brian for info, brian.barry@ctr-anglican.org.



St. Jerome translating the Bible. Painting by Domenico Ghirlandaio, 1480.

(And that's not even all! Sometimes when I'm reading a book that quotes a big block of Scripture, I skip it. And let's not even get into ways we've all see the Bible (ab)used to oppress or manipulate others.)

But this Easter season, we're going to be talking about it, warts and all. Maybe you're new. Maybe you've been around for a long time. Maybe you know a lot about reading the Bible and you just want to see how we'll handle things. All are welcome. "Beginners and Forgetters," as my parents say.

We'll start at the beginning, "So... what is the Bible?" We'll lay the ground-rules for how to read the Bible well. Maybe we'll even have some call-and-response. It'll be a party. Because, yes, it's a big, old, complicated book. But it's also the Good Book. And frankly, who doesn't need a no-stress refresher?

This Five-Week series will meet during the Adult Formation Hour in the baptistry, starting April 30th.

This Week at CTR

BUDGETS ARE DUE MAY 1: All ministry leaders please send FY2018 budgets to judy.delrosario38@gmail.com by Monday, May 1.

CHORAL EVENSONG: Sunday, May 7, 5:00 p.m., in the Church. The Choir of Christ the Redeemer will sing music by Peter Bloesch (on the John Donne text, "Death, be not proud"), Gideon Cox, and T. Tertius Noble. Deacon Scott Donis will officiate, and Deacon Adam Gosnell will preach a brief homily. Child care will be provided; a reception will follow. The service will last about an hour. Invite your family, friends, and neighbors. Pray to God by candlelight with glorious music.

FIRST TUESDAY PRAYER: Tuesday, May 2 from 10 a.m. to noon. The focus on the annual National Day of Prayer this Thursday, May 4, is "For Your Great Name's Sake, Hear Us...Forgive Us...Heal Us!" Please join us in Parish Hall as we follow the prayer points in Intercessors for America's newsletter, along with praying for the needs of our country, Israel and the Middle East, and the persecuted church around the world. For further information, please contact Linda Preston, ljp Preston7@yahoo.com.

Upcoming Events

LA VIDA FAMILY ADVENTURE DAY: The La Vida ministry of Gordon College is offering a community wide Family Adventure Day on Saturday May 6th from 8:30 to 4:30pm. Activities will include; adventure games, low initiatives and high course all of which make a great way for families to learn how to support and encourage one another as they work together and overcome challenges. For more information visit this website www.gordon.edu/familyadventureday

CHURCH CLEAN UP DAY: Saturday, May 13, from 8:30am until 1:30pm. We have plenty of outdoor chores big and small that need to be done to clean up and spruce up our property. Tasks for all ages. Come as you can and leave as you must; it's a great opportunity to meet new people as we share in caring for the building and grounds that God has provided for the work and worship of Christ the Redeemer. If you can participate, please contact David Greening at the church office: david.greening@ctr-anglican.org.

RACHEL WEeping: A special service of healing for those affected by the loss of life in the womb will take place on Sunday, May 21 at 5:00 p.m. This service is planned as a time of healing for mothers, fathers, grandparents, and all whose lives have been touched by loss through abortion, miscarriage, or stillbirth. Following music, readings, prayers, and teaching, anyone who desires will have the opportunity to receive prayer ministry for healing at the end of the service; a priest will also be available for confession. Please invite anyone you know who may be struggling with such a loss.

EMAIL CASTING CALL FOR PENTECOST SUNDAY: If you can say "Praise the Lord" or "We adore You, God!" in a language other than English, please email me, Wendy Dixon at wendenn@gmail.com. We need as many people as possible to help at the June 4 Pentecost festival day service, at 10am. You can use your native language, your high school French or Spanish, or google "how do you say Praise the Lord in Swahili?" (or whatever language you choose—kids or teens might enjoy this last idea.)

CONSECRATION OF THE NEW ANGLICAN CATHEDRAL: On Saturday, June 10 the consecration of All Saints' Anglican Cathedral in Amesbury, MA will be followed by a reception on the cathedral grounds. Come worship and celebrate!

Regular Events at CTR

TUESDAY:

Weekly Bible Study: 7:00pm-9:00pm. Contact Richard Thorndike, 978-922-3618, for more information.

WEDNESDAY:

Holy Eucharist & Confession: 6:30-7:30am

Seraphim Choir (grades 4 +), 4:00-5:15pm. Contact Dan McKinley dan.mckinley@ctr-anglican.org.

Cherubim Choir (grades 1-3), 4:00-5:00pm Contact Cyndi Kreyling kreylingc@gmail.com.

THURSDAY:

Moms In Prayer International.: 9am-10am Contact Flora Lee, floraisabella@gmail.com.

Women's Bible Study: 10am -11:30am Contact Kim Ober, kimwober@msn.com.

Choir of CTR: 7:15pm-9:15pm. New members are welcome and needed. Contact Minister of Music Dan 978-774-3163x105; dan.mckinley@ctr-anglican.org.



**KEEP
CALM
AND
LOVE
YOUR
NEIGHBOR**

During Eastertide Two Options for Adult Formation at 10 am:

Parish Hall: I See Satan Fall Like Lightning

For the remainder of Eastertide, during our 10 a.m. hour in the Parish Hall, we'll be taking a look at a very unusual but insightful book: *I See Satan Fall Like Lightning*. The title is taken from Jesus' words in Luke 10.18 — it is what He said when the 72 disciples he had sent out on mission returned to him. Why did he say that? What did he see? This book was written by Rene Girard, a French Catholic literary critic and anthropological philosopher, and shocked the Paris intelligentsia at the turn to the new millennium when it made the best-seller list there.

What Girard does in this book is to offer an explanation for much of what is good in Western culture, and where much has gone to extremes. More specifically, he offers a root idea for what has made Western culture unique, and what is the defining energy behind it. But in spite of having this extremely wide angle of view, the book also speaks to realities that come home to us everyday, to issues that are being played out before us in ever-increasing intensity it seems.

What we are doing in these weeks is not a book study; you don't have to go out and buy a copy and read along (though of course feel free!). I'll be offering a brief summary of the main idea of each section of the book as we go, and then I'll be interacting with a few of us who are also reading the book in terms of how that week's idea effects us and is being played out, and then we'll all chat about it together.

Baptistry: How to Read the Bible

The Bible is God's word to us, and is a profound gift of infinite worth through which our God loves us and meets us and grows near to us.

The Bible is also an ancient book written in another age and another culture. How do we read the Bible, understand it, apply it, find the Lord speaking to us through it?

Meeting in the Baptistry at 10 a.m. during these Eastertide weeks, Deacon Adam will be helping us to wrestle with these questions.



The Third Sunday of Easter: Random? Or Part of a Larger Story that Holds Together?

Some of Jesus' followers are disillusioned. This week we are in Luke's gospel and meet a couple of Jesus' followers for whom it's all just a bit too chaotic to hold together — just another injustice in a long lifetime of disappointments. Jesus offers them a larger story.

That very day two of them were going to a village named Emmaus, about seven miles from Jerusalem, and they were talking with each other about all these things that had happened. While they were talking and discussing together, Jesus himself drew near and went with them. But their eyes were kept from recognizing him. And he said to them, "What is this conversation that you are holding with each other as you walk?" And they stood still, looking sad. Then one of them, named Cleopas, answered him, "Are you the only visitor to Jerusalem who does not know the things that have happened there in these days?" And he said to them, "What things?" And they said to him, "Concerning Jesus of Nazareth, a man who was a prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people, and how our chief priests and rulers delivered him up to be condemned to death, and

crucified him. But we had hoped that he was the one to redeem Israel. Yes, and besides all this, it is now the third day since these things happened. Moreover, some women of our company amazed us. They were at the tomb early in the morning, and when they did not find his body, they came back saying that they had even seen a vision of angels, who said that he was alive. Some of those who were with us went to the tomb and found it just as the women had said, but him they did not see." And he said to them, "O foolish ones, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken! Was it not necessary that the Christ should suffer these things and enter into his glory?" And beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, he interpreted to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself.

So they drew near to the village to which they were going. He acted as if he were going farther, but they urged him strongly, saying, "Stay with us, for it is toward evening and the day is now far spent." So he went in to stay with them. When he was at table with them, he took the bread and blessed and broke it and gave it to them. And their eyes were opened, and they recognized him. And he vanished from their sight. They said to each other, "Did not our hearts burn within us while he talked to us on the road, while he opened to us the Scriptures?" And they rose that same hour and returned to Jerusalem. And they found the eleven and those who were with them gathered together, saying, "The Lord has risen indeed, and has appeared to Simon!" Then they told what had happened on the road, and how he was known to them in the breaking of the bread.

Luke 24:13-49 (ESV)

Notes on this Week's Sermon

The hinge moment (the moment the story swings on) comes when this happens:

What I find most surprising in this story is:

What in this story gives me hope, or joy, or courage, or _____:

God, I thank you for:

My prayer:

Itinerary for the Next Few Weeks

Try It in Life: Three weeks of Jesus' own metaphors explaining himself and his life: May 7, 14, 21.

May 7: Strength in the Midst of a World Gone Awry

It's a dangerous world, but Jesus does not intend to be our escape mechanism. Jesus uses a metaphor that, granted, we don't meet everyday — "I am the door to the sheepfold" — but the idea is that Jesus offers strength to face the realities.

May 14: A Beautiful Way of Life

Jesus' life stands as the most influential in history. His self-descriptive metaphor this week gives a part of the reason for that — "I am the way, the truth, and the life". We will emphasize the strand that seems to get the least attention: "the way". The idea is that following Jesus in his way of self-giving love makes life blossom beyond expectation.

May 21: Life, Connected

It's a big world and even greater

cosmos — is connection beyond the virtual possible? Jesus' metaphor this week is "I am the true vine" — as in the "source" and "energy" behind it all, and yet accessible to anyone.

Sermons are available online at, ctrnorthshore.org/teachings/.

