



WEEK 2 September 27 - October 3 H is for HOLINESS

Holiness is not about being perfect; it is about becoming more like Christ. **We are all called to holiness**, and as we continue our **C.H.R.I.S.T. Discipleship Path**, we are invited to recognize that holiness is at the heart of everything we do as disciples. God calls each of us to grow in love, surrender, virtue, and faithfulness in the ordinary circumstances of our lives. Holiness is lived out in the way we love our families, serve others, forgive, pray, persevere through challenges, and choose Christ each day. It is a lifelong journey of allowing God's grace to transform our hearts and shape us into the people He created us to be.

As we continue our C.H.R.I.S.T. Discipleship Path, we see how Community and Holiness go hand in hand. When we journey together as a Community, we are known, loved, and encouraged to grow closer to Christ. And as we grow in Holiness through prayer, the sacraments, and healing, we become more like Him, and our lives become a witness that invites others to know and follow Jesus. **Together, we are becoming a community of disciples making disciples—knowing and loving Jesus and making Him better known.**

OPENING PRAYER

Lord Jesus, we come before you with open hearts, asking for the grace to grow in holiness and become more like You. Blessed Fulton Sheen reminded us that "To do God's Will until death, that is the inner heart of all holiness." Give us a heart like Yours—a heart of humility, love, compassion, and service. Help us look beyond ourselves and recognize the needs of those around us.

Help us remember that You are calling each of us to holiness—not to be perfect, but to become more like You in the ordinary moments of our lives. Give us the courage to choose You, serve others, forgive, and follow Your example.

Open our hearts to Your Holy Spirit as we gather today. Help us listen, reflect, and encourage one another as we continue our journey toward You. May our lives become a witness of Your love and inspire others to know and follow You. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Readings for Sunday, September 27

First Reading — Ezekiel 18:25–28: God reminds us that our choices matter and calls us to turn away from sin and choose what is right.

Psalms- Psalm 25: "Teach me your paths, O Lord."

Second Reading — **Philippians 2:1–11:** St. Paul gives us Christ as the ultimate example of humility, selflessness, and putting the needs of others before ourselves.

Gospel — **Matthew 21:28–32:** Jesus reminds us that discipleship is more than what we say—it is ultimately shown by how we live and respond to God's will.

Discipleship Challenge:

Share how you were Christ for someone this past week.

(Please also share your story by emailing spiritualjourneywalnutcreek@gmail.com)

QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION AND DIALOGUE

Take some time to reflect on this week's message and discuss with your group:

LOOK IN

- Holiness is simply becoming more like Jesus—letting God's grace change the way we think, choose, love, and live. What does this definition of holiness mean to you? How might holiness look different in each person's life?
- What are some marks of holiness? Who is someone whose life points you toward Christ?
- What are some stumbling blocks that can make it difficult for you to follow God's will?
- In the Gospel, Jesus reminds us that what matters is not just what we say, but what we do. When have you found yourself saying "yes" to God but struggling to follow through—or initially saying "no" and later changing your heart?

LOOK TO CHRIST

- When you face a personal or family challenge, do you tend to turn to God first or rely on your own way? Why?
- Along the discipleship path, we are called not only to grow in holiness ourselves but also to help others grow. How can we encourage or build up the holiness of people around us?
- We often hear the message from Frank Sinatra, "I did it my way." What does it look like for us as disciples to witness a different way of living—choosing God's way instead of simply our own way?

PRAY

- Spend time each day asking Jesus, "How are You inviting me to become more like You?"
- Pray for the grace to grow in humility, love, and selflessness.
- Pray for those beginning the OCIA process, that they may encounter Christ and feel welcomed and supported by our parish community.

Extra: Discipleship Challenge —

This week be aware of opportunities of how you can be Christ for someone and if God calls you, do it!

ACT

- Look for one opportunity each day to put someone else's needs before your own.
- Consider attending:
 - St. John Vianney: First Friday Adoration and Mass (October 2)
 - Overnight Adoration/First Saturday devotion at St. Mary Church (October 2-3) - *Reservations are required for overnight adoration.*
 - First Saturday Mass with Anointing of the Sick - October 3; 8:30am (SMIC)
- Choose a patron saint whose life inspires you to grow in holiness. Learn one thing about their life and ask for their intercession. (Feast of St. Pedro Calungsod (Oct 2, SMIC); Feast of St. Francis- Blessing of the Pets (Oct 4- SJV; Oct 6- SMIC)

INSPIRE

- Encourage someone who is trying to grow in faith.
- Invite someone who may feel disconnected from the Church to take a simple next step toward Christ—come to Mass, join a small group, attend an event, or simply start a conversation.

INTERCESSIONS FOR THE GROUP AND CLOSING PRAYER

Take some time to pray together for the persons or people on the hearts of your small group members.

CLOSING PRAYER

Lord Jesus, thank You for gathering us together and for the ways You continue to call each of us to holiness. Help us to carry what we have received tonight into our daily lives.

Give us the grace to choose humility over pride, service over self-interest, and love over comfort. When we fall short, remind us of Your mercy and give us the courage to begin again. Help us to see the people and circumstances around us as opportunities to become more like You.

May our words, choices, and actions reflect Your love and draw others closer to You. Send us forth with hearts ready to serve, eyes open to the needs of others, and a desire to give You glory in all that we do.

We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.