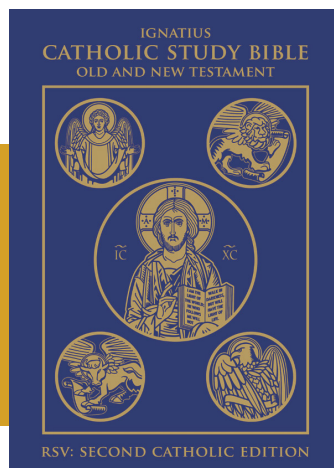


RECOMMENDED SUMMER PRACTICE

Recommendation by Tim McCormick

One of my favorite things to do in the summer is to spend more intentional time reading Scripture. With the weather being warmer, I seek every opportunity to be out in nature (whether at a park or just in the comforts of my backyard), and most often I will have my Bible with me. **There is something about reading the Word of God while hearing the chirping of birds, a lawn being cut in the distance, and a gentle breeze freshening up the heat of the day.** Now, I get that I am a bit of a Bible nerd, so what I just described might not seem like the most idyllic summer activity for you. But I want to encourage you to take up the Bible this summer. And with there being 73 books in the Catholic Bible, written by dozens of authors in different languages at different periods of history, I fully realize that it can be tough to get started. But if you haven't already, I want to encourage you to indeed get started. Dive into the Word of God. Let it teach you, encourage you, and even (at times) challenge you. I can't tell you how many times I have read a certain passage that I thought I knew well, but upon another reading of it, the Lord opened my heart to share with me an even greater understanding of the text. The Letter to the Hebrews in the New Testament reminds us that **"the word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the division of soul and of spirit, of joints and of marrow, and discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart (Heb. 4:12)."** So, consider dusting off that old bible that you have on the bookshelf this summer.

In recent decades, the amount of material that Catholics can get to help them navigate the Scriptures has grown dramatically. From podcasts to apps, audio Bibles to YouTube videos, there are a ton of places where you can get help as you get started. I just wanted to highlight one resource. This is a study bible that was published last year, one which all of us in the Theology Department have a copy of. It is the **Ignatius Catholic Study Bible, Old and New Testament** from Ignatius Press. Over 25 years in the making, this is the best one-volume Catholic Study Bible available on the market. This massive bible (and yes, it is massive) will keep you busy for a lifetime. It contains over 17,000 explanatory notes, helpful essays, introductions, maps, and so much more. Sometimes, there is more commentary on a page than the actual scriptural text. It is that comprehensive, and is well worth the investment.



OWN A COPY >>

Ignatius Catholic Study Bible

OLD AND NEW TESTAMENTS

www.ignatius.com/ignatius-catholic-study-bible-2h/



CONCLAVE REFLECTION | WELCOME, POPE LEO XIV!

By Ken Pullis

It has been less than one month since the cardinals elected a new pope: **Pope Leo XIV**. What an amazing moment for the Church and the world! It is an especially proud moment for us as a country. I never thought I would see an American pope in my lifetime, but God works in mysterious ways. Pope John Paul II was a bit of a personal hero for me. I attended Mass with Pope John Paul II at the Pontiac Silverdome with my family when he visited Detroit in 1987. While studying in Rome, I had three personal encounters with Pope John Paul II during Mass or following a papal audience. What a tremendous blessing to meet a living saint!



As a teacher, I have very fond memories of the last three conclaves. In 2005, when Pope John Paul II passed away on the eve of Divine Mercy Sunday, a feast that he gave to the Church in the year 2000 as part of the Jubilee Year celebration. I was teaching at Immaculate Conception Ukrainian Catholic High School in Warren at that time. I did a lot of reading and research about the conclave and its history. I spent several classes explaining the conclave and discussing it with my students. We gathered as a school in the gym to watch the funeral of John Paul II.

Less than two weeks later, surrounded by my junior and senior students in the Senior Lounge, we watched white smoke billow up from the chimney of the Sistine Chapel. I immediately took off running throughout the school, shouting at the top of my lungs, **"Habemus Papam! Habemus Papam!"** much to the delight of my students. I would continue this new tradition at Bishop Foley Catholic in 2013 when Pope Francis was elected on March 13 and again this year on May 8, 2025, when Pope Leo XIV was elected, minus the running this time, as the passage of time has caught up with me and my knees. **"Habemus Papam!"** rang loudly over the PA system shortly after 12:07 pm, and I heard echoes of cheers coming down the hall from nearby classrooms.

There is something beautiful about seeing my students as they watch the "chimney cam" in joyful expectation of white smoke. For whatever reason, there always seems to be a small group of seagulls or white pigeons that congregate on the rugged roof of the Sistine Chapel during a conclave. **Invariably, students will see them and exclaim, "It's the Holy Spirit! We are about to have a new pope!"** There is great excitement in the wake of Pope Leo's election, most notably by the residents of Chicago, as both Cubs and White Sox fans fight to claim him as their own. He is a lifelong White Sox fan and was even spotted, only a priest at the time, at a World Series game in 2005 when the White Sox last won it all. I was struck by some of the family members and his childhood friends saying that they knew he was going to be a priest at a very young age. One neighbor even made the bold prediction that he would be the first American pope when he was still a child!

Pope Leo XIV is a great blessing for us all. **Let us ask the Blessed Mother to watch over and protect him as the new Vicar of Christ.** May he lead us all closer to Jesus through his preaching and teaching, but especially through the example of a holy life of service. One of his titles as pope is "Servus Servorum Dei," which means "Servant of the servants of God." **Jesus came "to serve, not to be served," and that is what Pope Leo is called to do as he dons the Ring of the Fisherman, one of the symbols of the authority of the Holy Father.** God bless, Pope Leo XIV!

SCRIPTURE PASSAGE REFLECTION

Reflection by Steve Petty

With the summer fast approaching, I find myself more and more thinking about nature. One of the great joys in life is getting out in nature. For me, summer is the time to get out to a lake, spend time on the beach, or go walking through the woods. Ever since I was young there was something about nature that really spoke to me. When I'm in the woods I feel at peace.

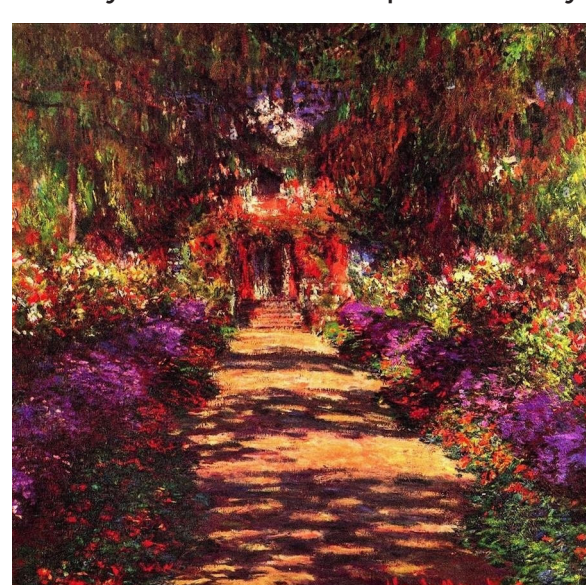
God speaks to us in many ways. One of the ways God speaks to me is through His Creation. Perhaps this quote from St. Paul of the Cross can articulate it better.



"Let everything in creation draw you to God. Refresh your mind with some innocent recreation and needful rest, if it were only to saunter through the garden or the fields, listening to the sermon preached by the flowers, the trees, the meadows, the sun, the sky, and the whole universe." St. Paul of the Cross

I really connect with this quote. Nature can preach a "sermon" to us, because it is created by God. You can always get insight into the heart of an artist by appreciating his/her art. The same is true with God. Think of nature as God's artwork. God reveals something about Himself through His art. What does he reveal? He reveals beauty. **Immersing ourselves in God's beauty lets the soul rest.** We don't have to think about anything, we can just "be." God's sermon to us: **"Be at peace."**

This quote also reminded me of one of the assignments I give many of my students at the end of junior year. In my junior theology classes, I use famous pieces of art to help convey a theological concept. By the end of the year, the students can confidently label 20 famous pieces of art and identify the artist. For the past several years now, I've given an assignment titled: **"Beauty is In The Eye of the Beholder."** For this assignment the students



look at five famous paintings that are placed on the table in front of the classroom. The students come up row by row and take a copy of the painting that appeals to them the most. They take the copy of the painting they chose back to their seat along with a worksheet. On the worksheet, the students list three words that come to mind when they contemplate the painting. Each student must write a couple of sentences explaining why they apply these words to the painting. After that, they must write a paragraph explaining why the painting appeals to them.

I can tell you that of the five choices, the painting **Garden Path at Giverny**, by the famous French impressionist artist, Claude Monet, is the overwhelming favorite with most students. Monet painted this piece in 1902.

The students apply all sorts of words to this painting, but three of the more common ones are: **peace, rest, and calm.** The students also have really thoughtful reflections about being out in nature. I had one student write, **"It's very inviting and warm. I feel peace when I stare at this painting. You can just stare at it and enjoy the scenery without having to think. It's very calming."** This is a common sentiment by all those students who chose this painting.

SPECIAL ASSIGNMENT

The soul needs rest as much as the body. The body finds rest in sleep. The soul finds its rest in leisure. **This summer, take the advice of St. John of the Cross and get out into nature: sunbathe on the beach, swim in the lake, go for a boat ride, take some long walks through the woods, climb a tree, or whatever it is you like to do.** Rest in the beauty of God's creation and taste His peace. We'll pick this up again in the fall.

HAVE A BLESSED SUMMER!
— THE BFC THEOLOGY DEPARTMENT