

Chinese Martyrs Catholic Church
Bible Sharing Program 2009-10
Exodus #6: God's Compassion & the Challenges in the Wilderness

TGQ = Tim Gray Study Set Questions
TGR = Tim Gray Study Set Responses
TGCD = Tim Gray CD Set
NJBC = New Jerome Biblical Commentary
FATHER = A Father Who Keeps His Promises
HO = Special Handout

A	<p><u>Introduction of related scriptural passages</u></p> <p>"Speak, LORD, for your servant is listening"</p>	<p>Ex 15:22-18:27</p> <p>1Sam 3:9</p>
B	<p><u>A Reflection on the Challenges faced by the Israelites in the Wilderness</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wonders and miracles continue to happen after the 10 Plagues. These reveal God's compassion in the wilderness. • Following the miracle of crossing the Red Sea and the joyful triumphant celebration is 40-year suffering in the wilderness. God treated the Israelites the same way He treats us that He wants us to grow in His love through suffering. God is not satisfied with merely saving the Israelites from Egypt, nor leading them into the Promised Land; more importantly, He desires the Israelites to be rid of idol worshipping and enter into the truth to worship the one true God Almighty. • Just like the Israelites who prefer "[sitting] by the fleshpots and ate [their] fill of bread" to risking starvation in the wilderness for freedom, most people are afraid of suffering. Our trust in God is easily shaken by suffering which makes us turning our back to God. • The Christian faith is built upon one suffering – Christ's suffering on the cross. This faith brings humanity eternal joy and peace. This joy comes from virtues that most people are unwilling to shoulder: sacrifice, compassion, humility, forbearance, and self-giving. True Christians must put their trust in God, for "My grace is sufficient for you, for power is made perfect in weakness", and "Therefore I am content with weaknesses, insults, hardships, persecutions, and calamities for the sake of Christ; for whenever I am weak, then I am strong". • When calling on God's goodness and might, one must trust that God respects human freedom, and willingly "permits [evil], however, because he respects the freedom of his creatures and, mysteriously, knows how to derive good from it". • Humanity participates in Christ's suffering through our own suffering; through the grace of Sacraments, suffering has become a means of participation in Christ's salvation. This teaching is left to us through the Church's apostles, saints, martyrs and JP II. • The call and duties vary from people to people. Some believed that the challenges given to the Israelites were too harsh. However, the Israelites are God's chosen people who are responsible for witnessing to all nations for God, their challenges need to be more severe. We must reflect and reexamine our call and duties through constant prayers so that we may respond appropriately to God's call, "thy will be done". 	<p>TGQ 29</p> <p>TGQ 29 Father p 143</p> <p>Ex 16:3</p> <p>2Cor12:9-10</p> <p>CCC 311</p> <p>HO 1 & 2 Col 1:24</p> <p>TGQ 29</p>
C	<p><u>God's Compassion in the Wilderness: Sweet Water, Manna, Quails, Living Water</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The first born of all peoples, Adam, and the first born of all nations, Israel, both faced a first challenge relating to food. Their failures can only be reversed by the New Adam, the ultimate first born of God, Jesus, who has triumphed over the temptations in the wilderness. We must remember this teaching when trying to help each other through fasting. 	<p>Ex 15:22-17:7</p> <p>NJBC 3:26 S.Hahn, "Finding Jesus in O.T." tape #4 Mt 4: 1-4</p>

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Israelites begin to complain about their hardships only 3 days after the miracle of crossing the Red Sea, this reveals human weaknesses and that they are willing to trade freedom for comfort. God can take the Israelites out of Egypt but cannot take the Egypt out of the Israelites! • “from bitter to sweet water” offers a stark contrast to the first plague. If the Israelites are willing to heed God’s words, He will not punish humanity for He is not a vengeful God, but a “healing God”. The staff that turns bitter water into sweet water prefigures Christ’s cross. • What is “manna”? Manna actually foreshadows the Eucharist. This is a solid proof of our Church’s “fullest truth and a key element of sanctification”. Therefore, we must work tirelessly to evangelize. • Collect food sufficient for one day ⇒ “give us this day our daily bread”: God asks for our trust, letting go, and compassion, therefore, “those who gathered much had nothing over, and those who gathered little had no shortage”. • Striking the rock to bring water – prefigures Christ. 	<p>TGR 6-1,2 S.Hahn, <i>“Finding Jesus in O.T.”</i> tape #4</p> <p>NJBC 3:26, SK Note</p> <p>TGQ 31, TGR 6-6 Jn 6:30ff</p> <p>Ex 16:16ff, TGR6-4, Mt 6:34, 2Cor 8:14-15 1Cor 10 :1-4, Is 28 :16, Ps 118 :22, Jn 7 :37-39</p>
<p>D</p>	<p><u>The Battle Against the Amalek and Jethro</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The battle against the Amaleks reveals the power of intercessory prayers. God continues to fight for us in our faith life but human efforts are necessary, too. • Contrary to Pharaoh, Jethro recognizes God’s might and “know” God; he offers God the holocaust and shares a meal with the elders. Jethro’s suggestion: a faith community must be structured and authority must be delegated. 	<p>Ex 17:8 - 18:27</p> <p>TGR 6-8, 9</p> <p>TGR 6-11, Deu 1:9-18</p>

SPECIAL HANDOUT

1. Although it remains difficult to understand suffering, Jesus has made it clear that is value is linked to his own suffering and death, to his own sacrifice. In other words, by your suffering you help Jesus and his work of salvation. Your call to suffering requires strong faith and patience. Yes, it means that you are called to love with special intensity. (JP II, address at Dublin, Sept. 29, 1979)
2. Through the grace of the Sacrament, the sick receives strength and God’s grace so that he/she is united with Christ in suffering. In certain ways, he/she is blessed by God, similar to the fruit bore by our Saviour through His suffering. Suffering is the fruit of the Original Sin, but it has received a new meaning now: suffering has become one of the means to participate in Christ’s salvation.