

A serene landscape featuring a calm lake in the foreground, reflecting the surrounding environment. The background consists of misty, rolling mountains and a dense forest of evergreen trees along the shoreline. The overall color palette is soft and muted, with shades of teal, light blue, and pale green, creating a peaceful and atmospheric scene.

Hosea

“Journey to Union”

Introduction

- Overview
- Review: Image of Marriage
- Universal Call
- Principles: Spiritual Journey
- Stages: Spiritual Journey
- Getting Back to Hosea

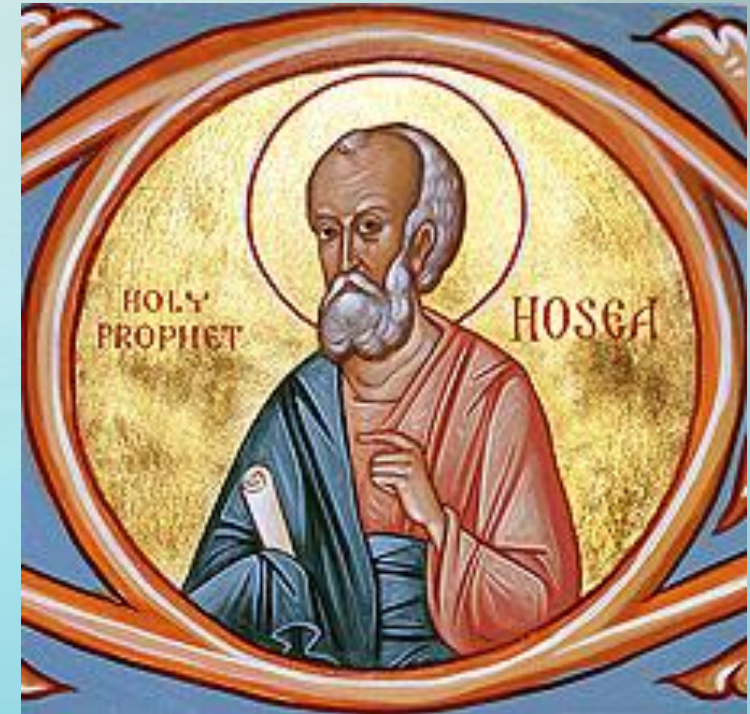


Image of Marriage

The image of marriage as God's relationship with His people - found in later Scripture

“As a young man marries a virgin, so your Builder shall marry you” ~ Is. 62:5

Can the wedding guests fast while the bridegroom is with them?” ~ Mk. 2:19

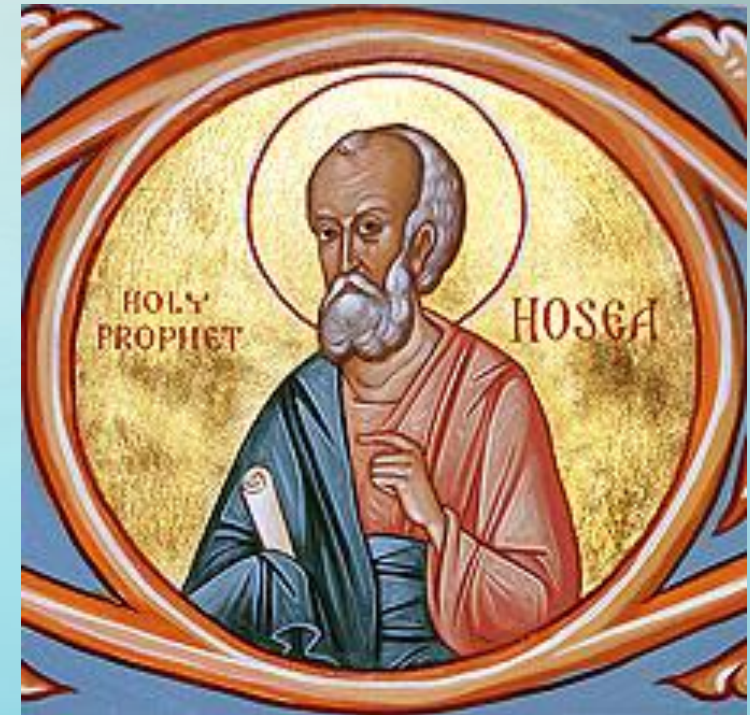


Image of Marriage

Consider St. Paul:

“Husbands love your wives, even as Christ loved the church and handed himself over for her ”

~Eph. 5:25

“For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife... I speak in reference to Christ and the church.” ~ Eph.

5:31-32

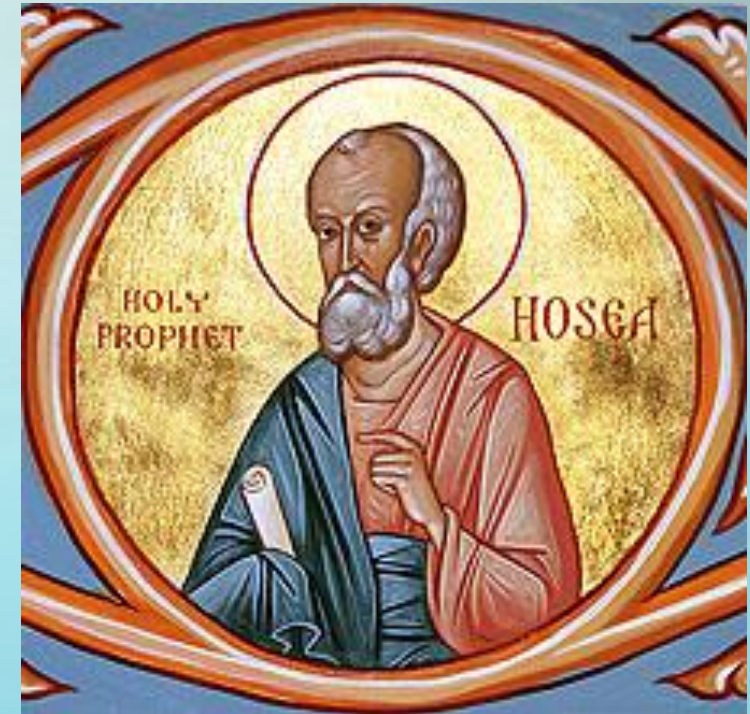
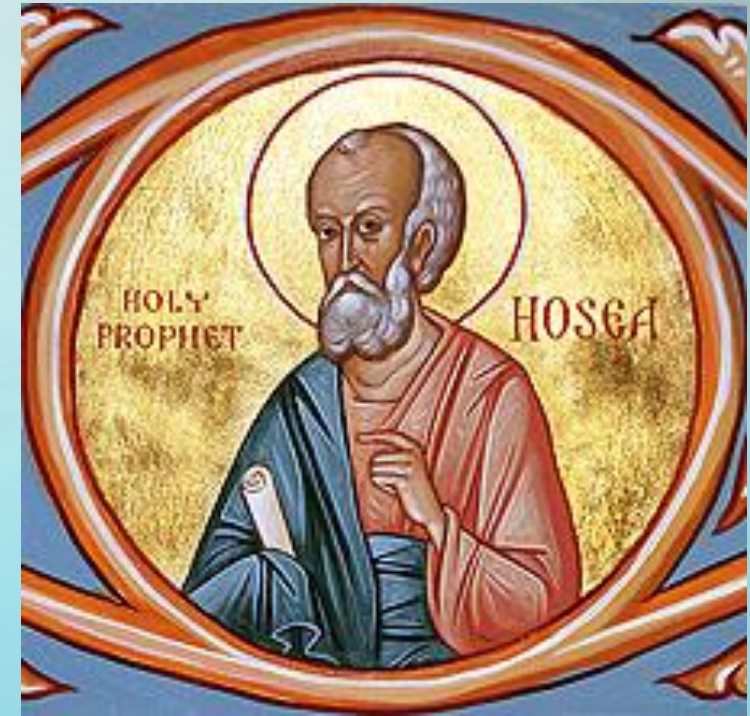


Image of Marriage

The Bible begins with the creation of man and women – and weds them: “bone of my bone and flesh of my flesh” ~ Genesis

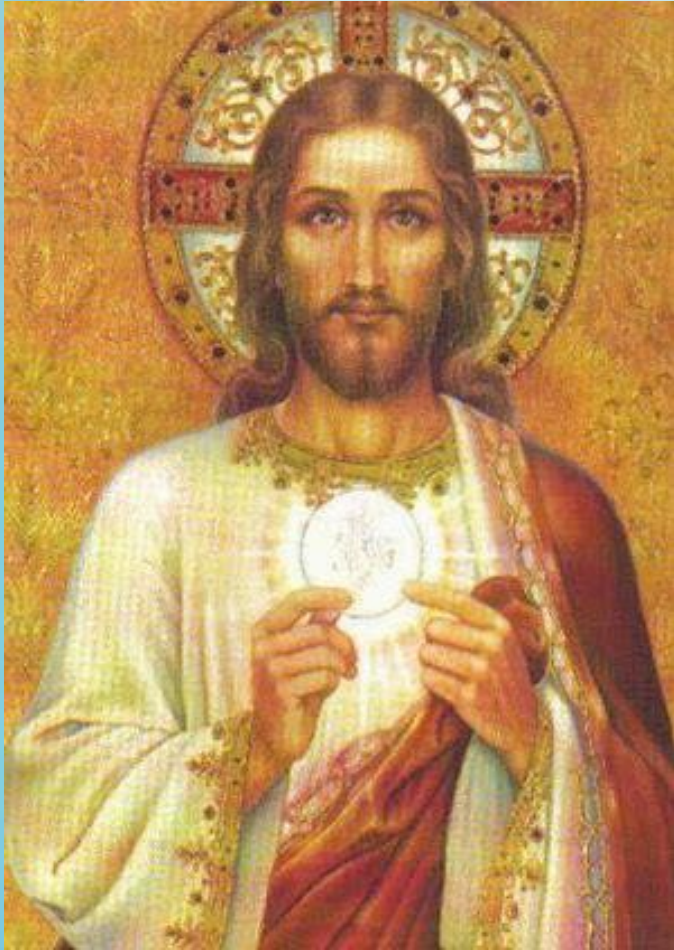
The Bible ends with the image of marriage: “the Spirit and the bride say, “Come”” ~ Rev. 22:17



Religious Life – Married to Christ

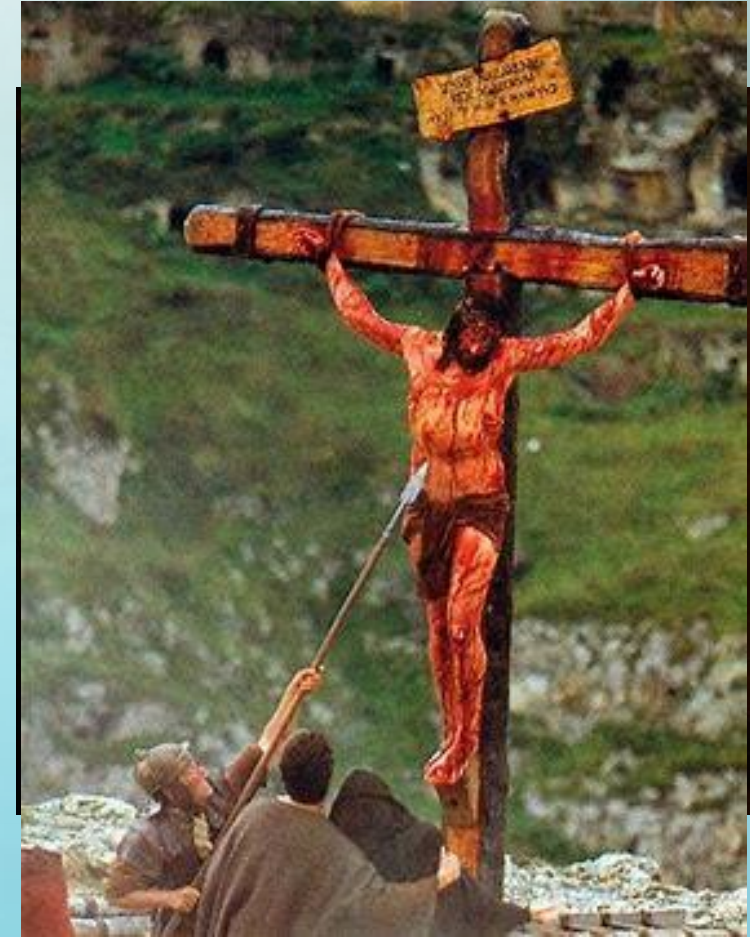


Relationship of Intimacy



In Christ's crucifixion, he gave himself for us.

In Eucharist Christ gives himself for us.



In the Sacramental Life of the Church:

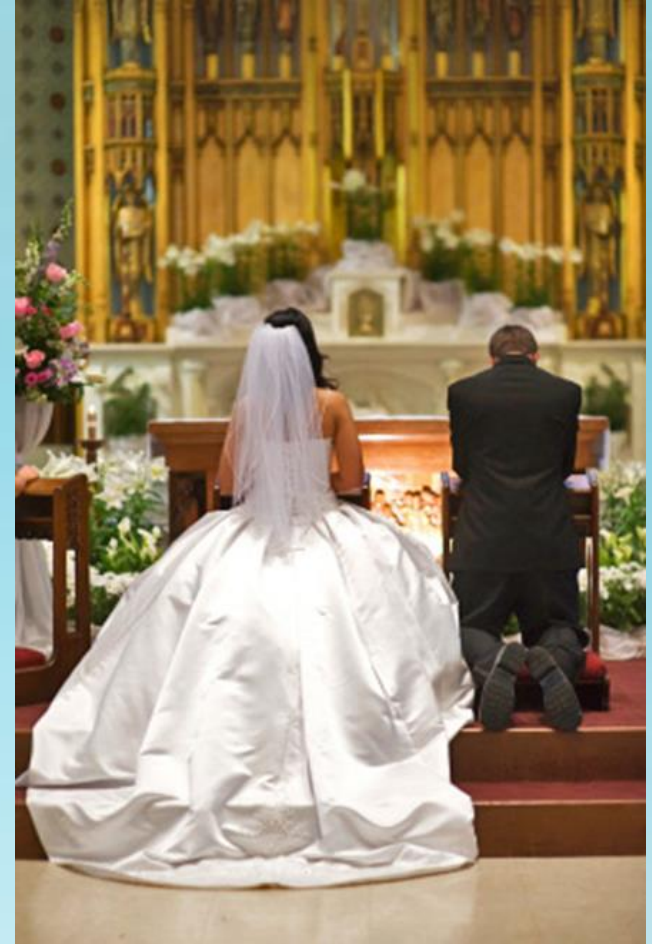
God invites us
into a deeper
union with
Him...

We are His
Beloved...



Mass is like a Wedding...

Our marriage to God!





Your Wedding...

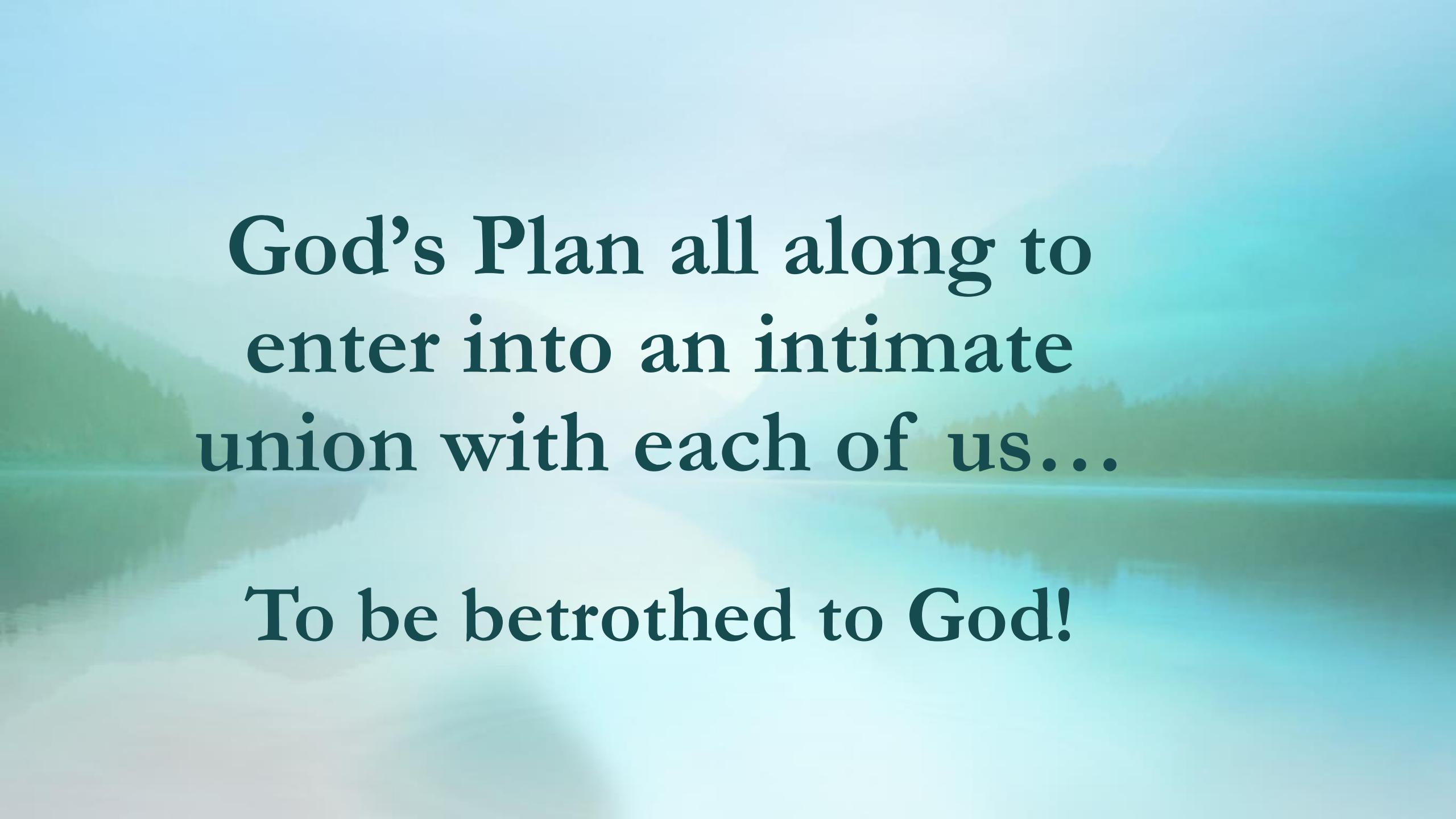


Wedding:

- Get cleaned up and dressed up
- Get a gift for the couple
- Arrive early
- Ask God to bless their marriage
- Celebrate with family and friends!

Mass:

- Get cleaned up and dressed up
- Arrive early
- Give the gift of yourself
- God gives the gift of Himself
- Ask God to bless your union with Him
- Celebrate with family and friends!



**God's Plan all along to
enter into an intimate
union with each of us...**

To be betrothed to God!



**An Intimate Union with
Me??**

Really??!??

Relationship of Intimacy

St. Teresa of Avila:

Obstacle to growth in holiness is the disbelief that one is called to a deep union with God.



Universal Call

Everyone is called to holiness...

Lumen Gentium: p. 39

"For this is the will of God, your sanctification"

~ 1 Thes. 4:3

"Be perfect as your heavenly Father is perfect"

~Mat. 5:48

Universal Call

“Holiness is a matter of bringing our wills into union with God’s will.”



~Teresa of Avila

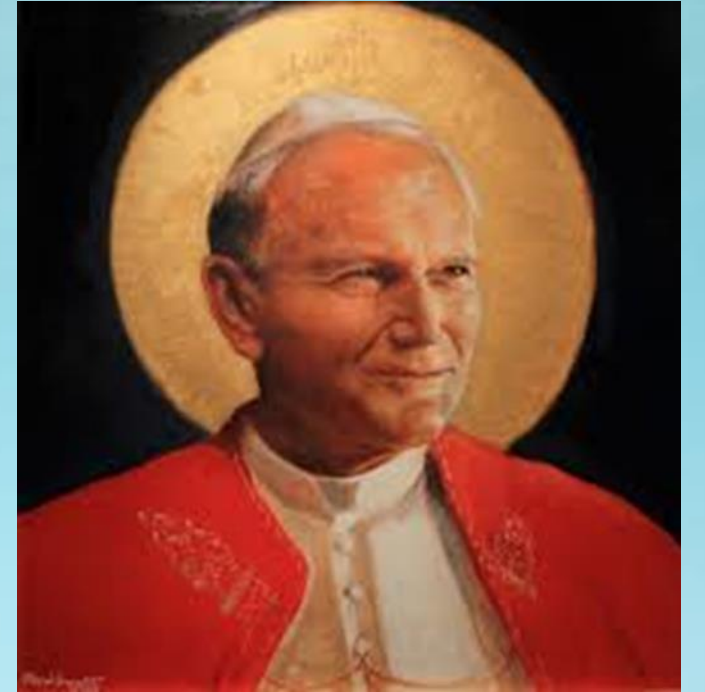
“Perfection consists in doing His will, in being what He wills us to be.”

~Therese of Lisieux



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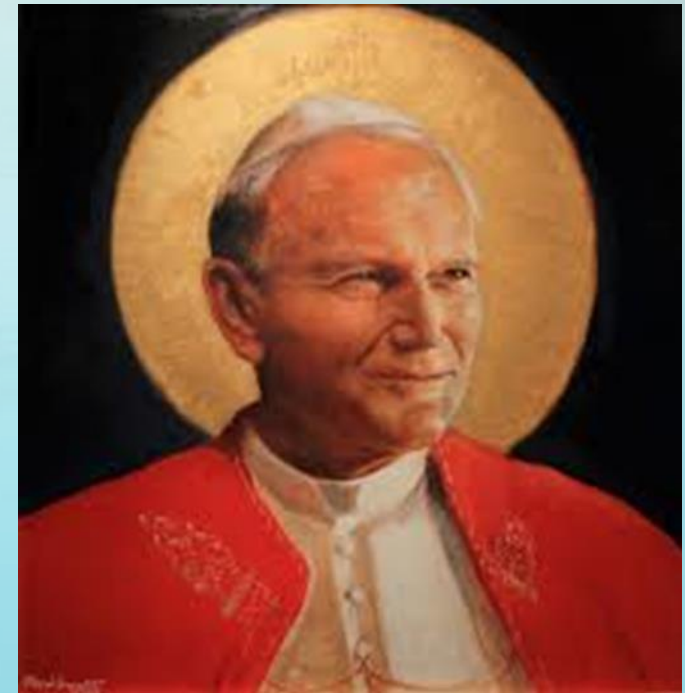
Pope St. John Paul II



Universal Call

Christian life today has to be lived deeply, or else it may not be possible to be lived at all...

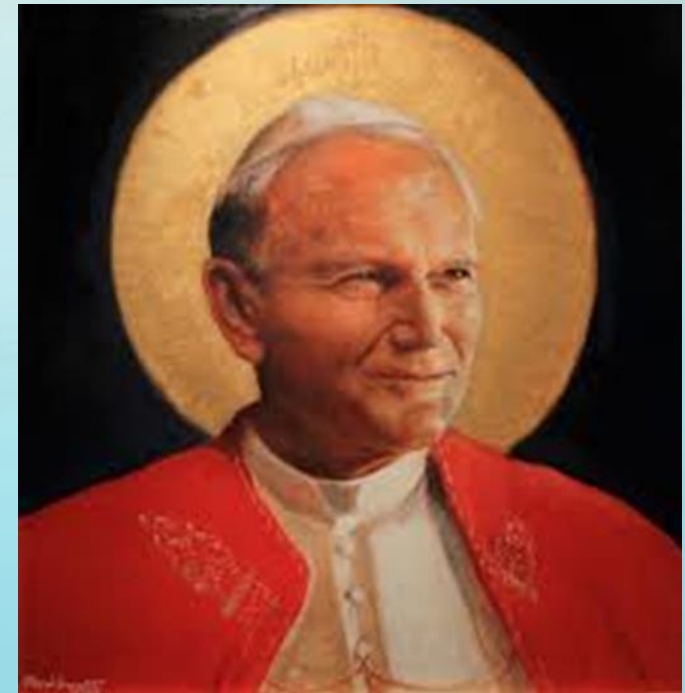
In the midst of this world wide secularization process there is still a hunger for meaning, for spirituality...



Universal Call

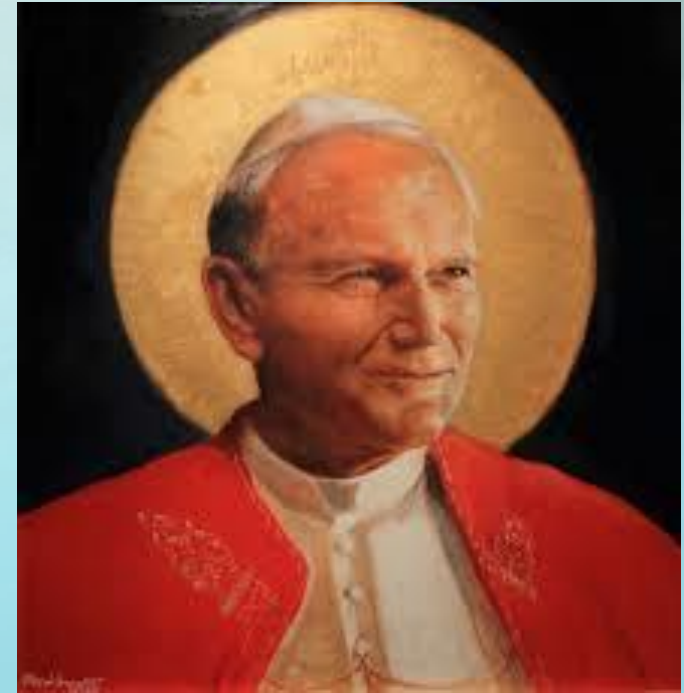
Difficult to respond adequately without availing of the wisdom of the mystical tradition of the Church...

Focuses on the process of prayer and the stages of growth in the spiritual life...



Principles: Spiritual Journey

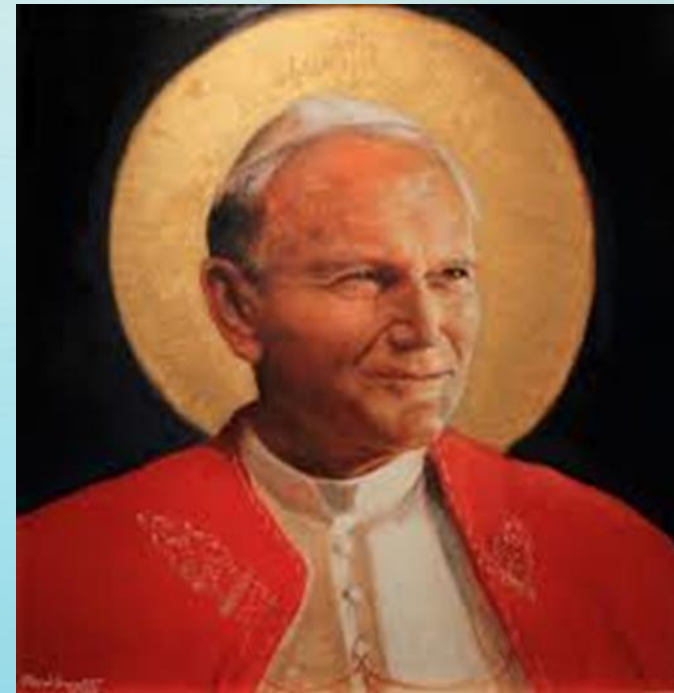
The spiritual journey “is a journey totally sustained by grace, nevertheless demands intense spiritual commitment and is no stranger to painful purifications. But it leads, in various possible ways, to an ineffable joy experienced by mystics as “nuptial union.” ~St. John Paul II



Principles: Spiritual Journey

#1

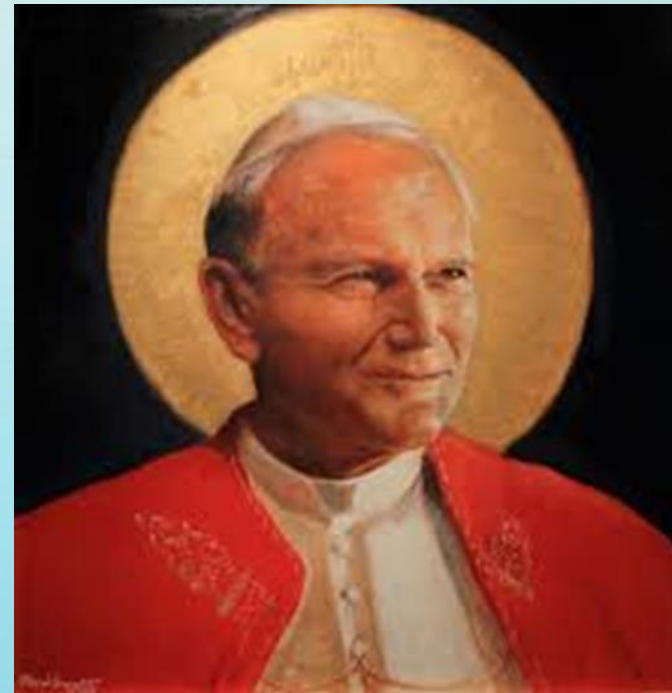
We are totally dependent on God's grace for progress in the spiritual journey



Principles: Spiritual Journey

#2

Our effort is
indispensable; not
sufficient but
necessary to bring
about union



Principles: Spiritual Journey

Essentially there are only two things a person can do:

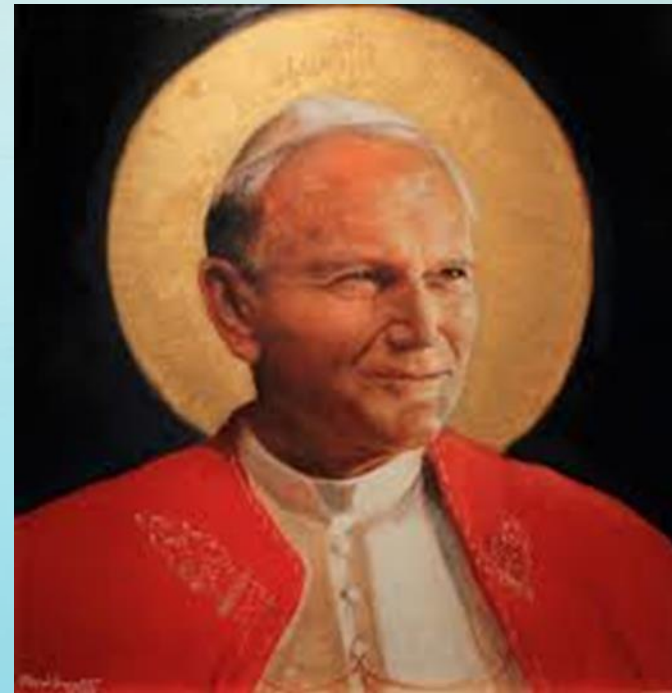
- Total surrender to God
- Embrace God's will



Principles: Spiritual Journey

#3

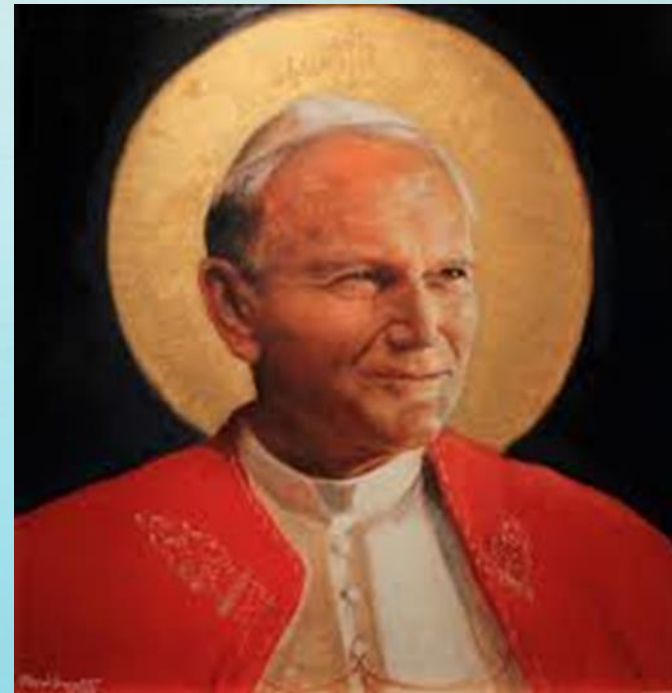
Much has to change
in us in order to
make us capable of
a deep union with
God



Principles: Spiritual Journey

#4

All the effort and
pain is worth it!



Spiritual Journey

“The source of all unhappiness and misery is sin and its effects, and the sooner the purification of sin and its effects can take place in our life, the happier we will be and better able to truly love others.”

Spiritual Journey

The whole purpose of our creation, the whole purpose of our redemption is so that we may be fully united with God in every aspect of our being.

We exist for union!

Stages: Spiritual Journey

Stages of the Spiritual Growth:

- Purgative
- Illuminative
- Unitive

Stages: Spiritual Journey

Purgative

- Initial Conversion
- Turning away from sin
- Beginning habits of prayer
- Conforming to the Church's moral law
- Steps to a stabilizing life in the Church

Stages: Spiritual Journey

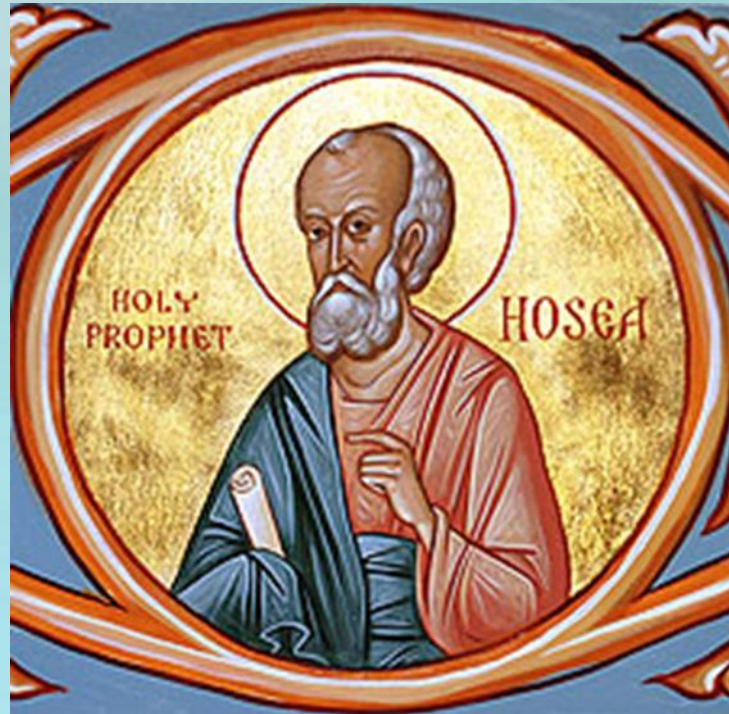
Illuminative

- Deeper prayer
- Growth in virtues
- Deeper love of neighbor
- More complete surrender to God
- Greater detachment from all – closer relationship with God

Stages: Spiritual Journey

Unitive:

- Deep joy – profound humility
- Freedom of fears of suffering/trials
- Great desire to serve God
- Apostolic Fruitfulness (i.e. Mother Teresa)
- Suffering: grace to share in the sufferings of Christ



Back to Hosea

Back to Hosea

“I will strip her naked, leaving her as on her day of birth; I will make her like the desert, reduce her to an arid land...” ~ Hosea 2:5

“Then will remove from her mouth the names of Baals...”
~Hosea 2:19

“For it is he who has rent, but he will heal us; he has struck us, but he will bind our wounds.”
~Hosea 6:1

“So I will allure her; I will lead her into the desert and speak to her heart...” Hosea 2:16

I will espouse you to me forever;
I will espouse you in right and in justice; in love and I mercy.”
~Hosea 2:21

On the third day he will raise us up in his presence; ... let us strive to know the Lord; ... his judgment shines forth like the light of day!” ~ Hosea 6:2-3

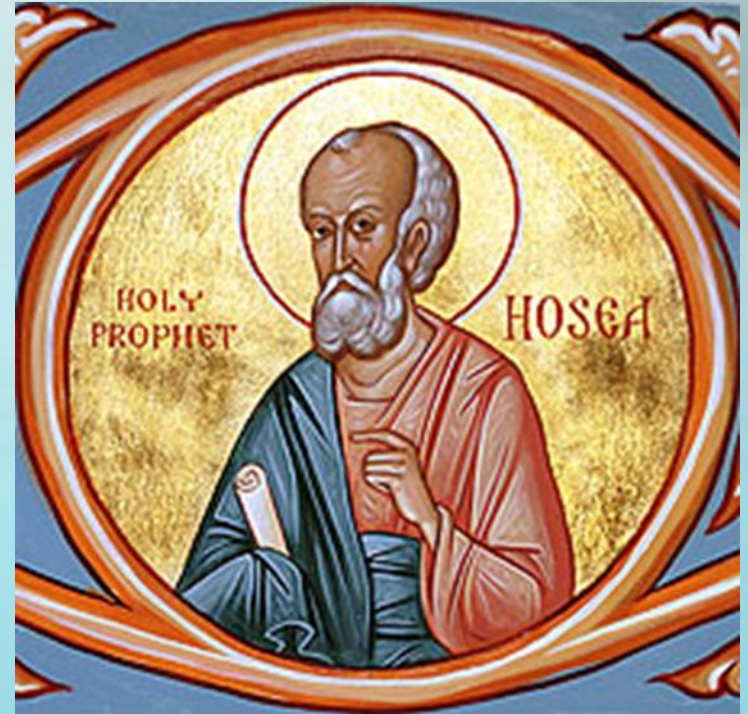
Back to Hosea / Back to Lent

- Three “staples” of Lent?
 - Fasting: Purging / Detaching what is not of God
 - Prayer: Relationship with God
 - Almsgiving: Love of Neighbor

Back to Hosea / Back to Lent

- It is a time of renewal:
 - Individually
 - And as Church

Getting back to basics!



Back to Basics!!??!!

"The two elements which are especially characteristic of Lent -- the recalling of baptism or the preparation for it, and penance..."

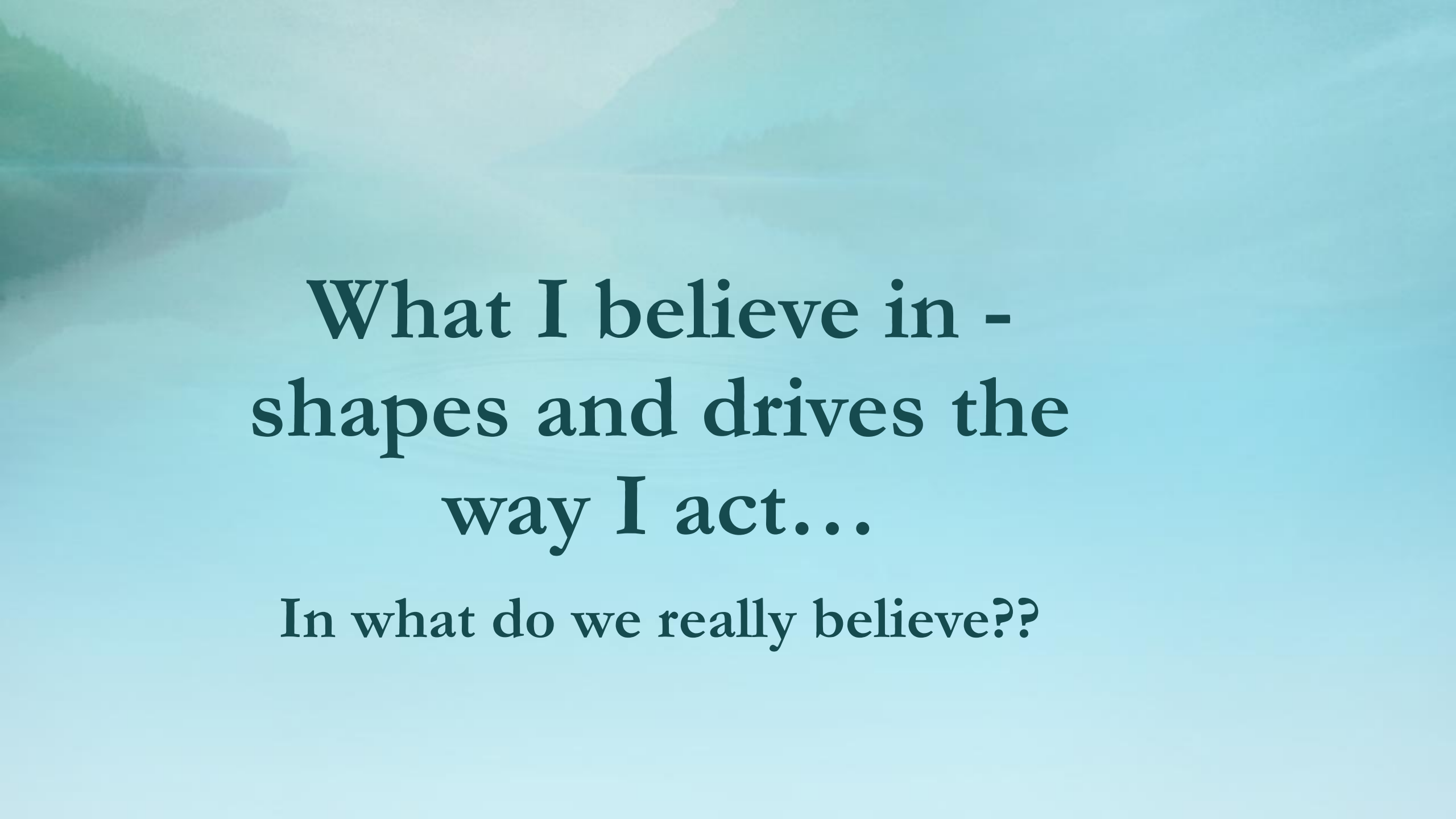
~The Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy
(Vatican II)

What are the Basics?

- Basics are in Baptism
 - Rejecting Satan, all his empty works and all his empty promises...
- We reject the evil and sin in our lives
- We need purging with God's help

What are the Basics?

- **Choosing God (Creed):**
 - I believe – the Father Almighty
 - I believe in Jesus Christ
 - I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Holy Catholic Church
- **We believe with God's help**

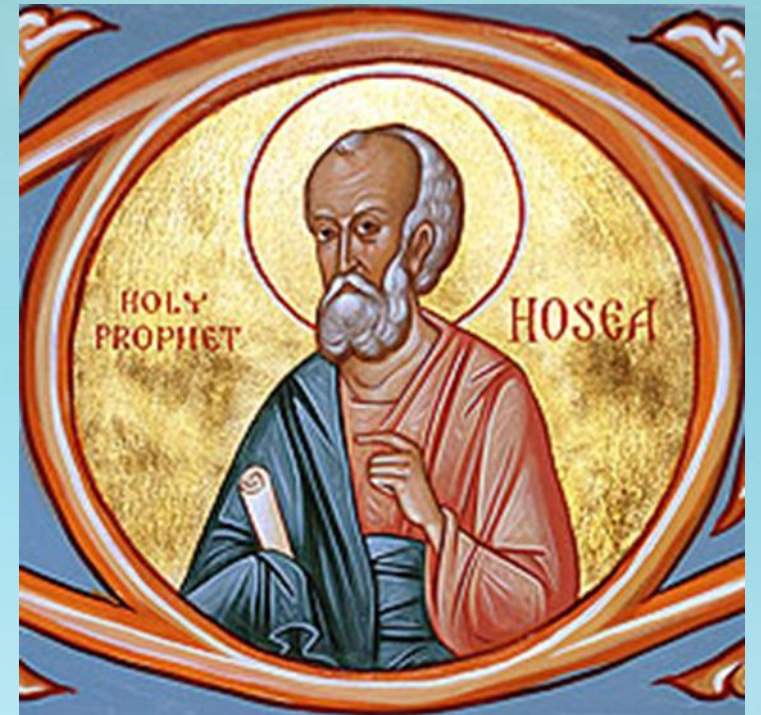


**What I believe in -
shapes and drives the
way I act...**

In what do we really believe??

Why is Hosea Relevant?

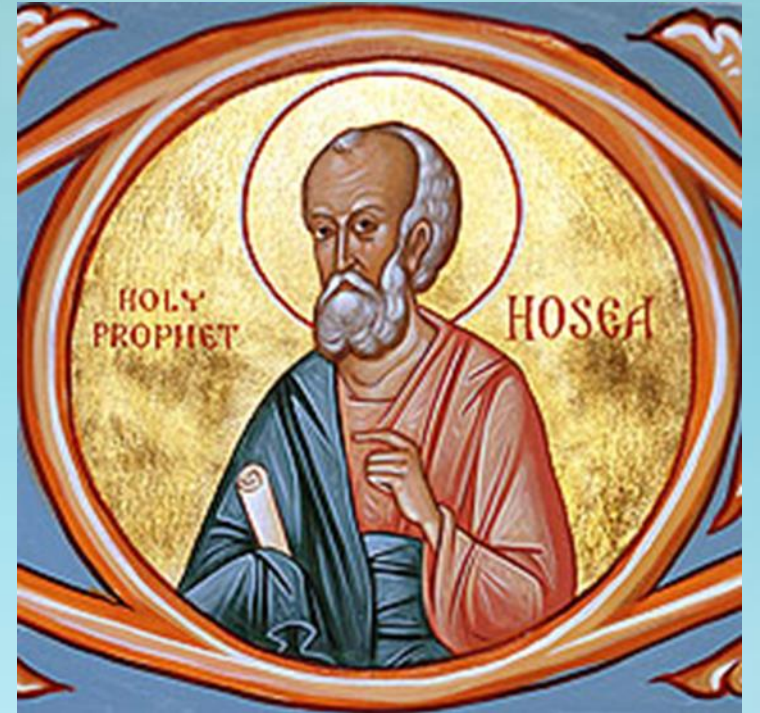
- **Natural Link to Lent**
- **Provides an image that has endured**
- **Communicates that all are called to holiness**



Why is Hosea Relevant?

In Hosea is an Invitation, a Call to an intimate relationship with God

The Fulfillment of all our Desires



A serene landscape featuring a calm lake that perfectly reflects the surrounding environment. The water is a clear, light blue, mirroring the sky above. In the background, there are lush green mountains with dense forests, their peaks slightly hazy. The overall scene is peaceful and natural. The text "Thank You!" is centered in the lower half of the image in a dark green, serif font.

Thank You!