Homework Preparation for RCIA Lesson 1: “Faith” and “Four Marks of the Church”

**FAITH**

Read:

Mark 9:17-24

Matthew 9:20-22

Genesis 12:1-4

**MEDITATION**
Jesus has said: “All things are possible to him that believeth” (Mark 9:22). It would seem that before an act of living faith, blind, unconditional faith, God does not know how to resist and considers Himself almost obliged to grant our requests. The Gospel tells us this on every page: before Jesus performed a miracle, He always asked for an act of faith. “Do you believe that I can do this unto you?” (Matthew 9:28); and when faith was sincere, the miracle took place immediately. “Be of good heart, daughter,” He said to the woman who was troubled with an issue of blood, “thy faith hath made thee whole” (Matthew 9:22). Jesus never said, “My omnipotence has saved you, has cured you,” but your faith, as if to make us understand that faith is the indispensable condition that He requires if we are to benefit from His omnipotence. He, the Almighty, will use His omnipotence only for the benefit of those who firmly believe in Him. This is why the divine Master refused to perform in Nazareth the many miracles He performed elsewhere. The more lively our faith, the more powerful it is with the very power of God. “If you have faith as a grain of mustard seed,” Jesus affirmed, “you shall say to this mountain, ‘Remove from hence hither,’ and it shall remove; and nothing shall be impossible to you” (Matthew 17:19). These words are true, literally true, like everything in the Gospel; if they are not effectual for us, it is only because our faith is very weak. How many difficulties we meet with in life which are for us real mountains to move! Difficulties in the spiritual life: faults we cannot overcome, virtues we cannot seem to acquire; difficulties in our everyday life: insufficient means of support, duties which surpass our ability or our strength…. And we stop, discouraged, at the foot of these mountains: “It is impossible, I cannot do it!” It would take only a little faith like a grain of mustard seed, which is very tiny indeed. But provided that faith is living, capable of sprouting like the mustard seed, provided that faith is certain, resolute, supernatural, and that it counts only on God and trusts in His Name alone, this faith will confront every difficulty whatsoever with courage. Oh! if we could only have such faith! “Nothing is impossible to him that believeth.”

From Blog post by Dan Burke, spiritualdirection.com July 15, 2019

**“FOUR MARKS OF THE CHURCH”**

Read the Nicene Creed, below. This is the prayer we say at every Sunday Mass, for it embodies our faith in a nutshell. Throughout the coming weeks, we will be diving deep into the Creed so that when you recite it as Masses you know what you are saying and say it with faith.

Nicene Creed

I believe in one God,
the Father almighty,
maker of heaven and earth,
of all things visible and invisible.

I believe in one Lord Jesus Christ,
the Only Begotten Son of God,
born of the Father before all ages.
God from God, Light from Light,
true God from true God,
begotten, not made, consubstantial with the Father;
through him all things were made.
For us men and for our salvation
he came down from heaven,

and by the Holy Spirit was incarnate of the Virgin Mary,
and became man.

For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate,
he suffered death and was buried,
and rose again on the third day
in accordance with the Scriptures.
He ascended into heaven
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.
He will come again in glory
to judge the living and the dead
and his kingdom will have no end.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father and the Son,
who with the Father and the Son is adored and glorified,
who has spoken through the prophets.

I believe in one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church.
I confess one Baptism for the forgiveness of sins
and I look forward to the resurrection of the dead
and the life of the world to come. Amen.