



INTRODUCTION

Welcome to Fr. Robert Barron's in-depth study of conversion. Over the course of this study, we will examine the stories of six figures from the Bible who changed in response to God's call. By exploring these stories, we will come to a deeper understanding of the dynamics of conversion in our lives: how to discern God's call to us, how to overcome the obstacles we put up to answering the call, and the fruit of saying "yes" to God.

This guide is designed to help you apply to your life what you will learn from Fr. Barron's look at the Catholic Tradition. The aim is to help you study, reflect upon and act in obedience to the will of God in Christ. You will have the chance to dig into the Catholic Tradition and grapple with Scripture and the Church's teaching as it is summarized in the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*. You will also be able to use the materials provided in Fr. Barron's presentation in order to assess and enhance your life as a disciple of Jesus Christ. The core of each guide is the QUESTIONS FOR UNDERSTANDING and the QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION, which will reinforce the main points made in each section of Fr. Barron's presentation.

Throughout the study, you will be asked to reference different Bible verses and passages. We recommend the *New American Bible* or the *Revised Standard Version*, or you can also use another acceptable Catholic translation. To answer the questions, you will need to refer to the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, which can be purchased at your local bookstore or found online at: www.scborromeo.org/ccs.htm.

To begin, we will listen to Fr. Barron's brief introductory remarks on the definition of conversion and consider the questions on the following pages.

QUESTIONS FOR UNDERSTANDING

1. Read the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* (CCC) paragraphs 1427 and 1226-1229. How is Baptism the Sacrament of the “first and fundamental conversion”? Read CCC 1263-1266. What are the gifts of Baptism, and how does the Sacrament change a person?

2. Read CCC 1428-1433. Why is continual conversion necessary in the life of the baptized? What does it mean, and how is it lived out by the baptized?



3. Read Mark 1:14-15. Jesus' first public preaching is focused on the Kingdom of God being "at hand." Where is he saying that Kingdom can be found? What must his hearers do in order to be united with the Kingdom?

QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION

1. When were you baptized? How have you experienced the fruits of Baptism and other moments of conversion throughout your own life?



2. Fr. Barron points out that what sin does is narrow our vision and experience of the world: we center on ourselves; we live out of a “small soul.” The Greek word used for repentance is “metanoia,” which means, at root, to “change one’s mind.” This is not merely accepting new ideas, but taking on an entirely new way of thinking and being. As Fr. Barron puts it, metanoia is to live in intimacy with the “Great Soul” – God – and to see the world each day with God’s eyes. In what ways have you experienced sin narrowing your vision and experience of life? If you have experienced conversion and profound repentance in your life before, how did your vision change?

3. The history of Christianity is filled with the called and the converted. Who are some of your favorite figures in the Bible and in Church history who have answered God’s call and “changed their minds”? How do their lives reflect the change from a narrow, self-centered focus to one attuned, above all, to God’s will?