



## INTRODUCTION

Welcome to Fr. Robert Barron's look at the journey to sanctity. Over the course of this study, we will be taking a look at the teaching of the Catholic Church concerning our center in Christ Jesus, his power to heal our lives, and his command to go on mission.

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 lesson 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.

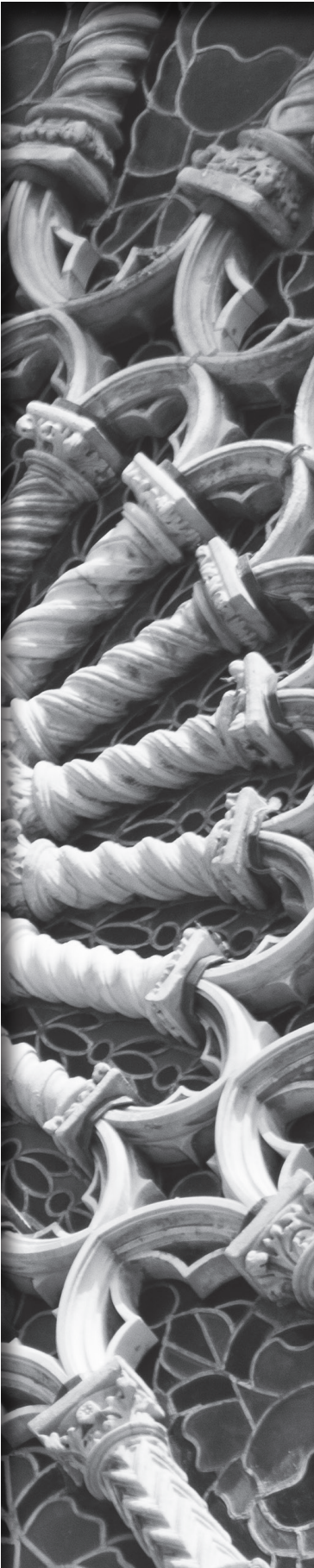
Throughout the study, you will be asked to reference different Bible verses and passages. We recommend the *New American Bible* or the *Revised Standard Version*, or you can also use another acceptable Catholic translation. To answer the questions, you will need to refer to the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, which can be purchased at your local bookstore or found online at: [www.scborromeo.org/ccc.htm](http://www.scborromeo.org/ccc.htm). In addition, you will be given various resources as opportunities for further study that will relate to the discussion.

So without further ado, let's listen to Fr. Barron's introductory remarks and then consider the questions on the following pages.



3. Read Matthew 5:43-48. To what qualities does Jesus link his understanding of perfection? How does his commandment here surpass the old law? Read Romans 13:9-10. How does Paul see the relationship between love and the law?

4. Read Matthew 4:17 and CCC 1430-1432. What is the very first thing Jesus says to inaugurate his public ministry? Why do you think this is the first thing he says? What does it mean?



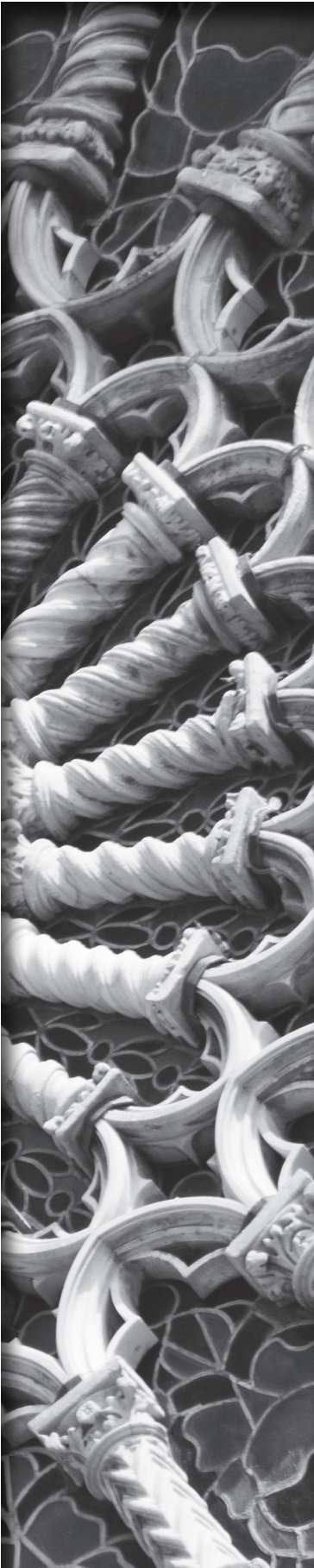
5. Read John 13:1-15. How does Jesus model for us the fact that “it’s not about you”? What does this passage reveal about sanctity?

## QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION

1. The scriptural passage of 2 Peter 1:4 tells us that Christ has made us “partakers in the divine nature,” and Ephesians 4:12-16 tells us that God gives us gifts “for building up the body of Christ, until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God . . . Speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ, from whom the whole body, joined and knit together by every joint with which it is supplied, when each is working properly, makes bodily growth and builds itself up in love.” How do you see yourself “growing up every way into him who is the head”? Where might you need to experience more growth?

2. What's the difference between being a Christian and being a saint? Which is your goal and why?

3. Have you known a person who was saintly? What was he/she like? How has he/she influenced you?



4. Fr. Barron quotes Leon Bloy's remark, "The only tragedy in life is not to be a saint." We tend to think of sins as things we do (sins of commission). Have you ever experienced the tragedy of a missed opportunity to obey God (a sin of omission)? How did this affect or change you and your attitude toward holiness?

## OPPORTUNITIES FOR ADDITIONAL STUDY

Thomas Merton's *The Seven Storey Mountain* is one of the great spiritual autobiographies of the 20th Century. Using the image of Mount Purgatory from Dante Alighieri's classic poem, *The Divine Comedy*, Merton traces the story of his quest for God, which led to his conversion to the Catholic faith at age 23. He left behind a promising literary career and resigned as a teacher of English literature to enter the Abbey of Our Lady of Gethsemani in Kentucky on December 10, 1941.

His description of that moment is poignant:

"...So Brother Matthew locked the gate behind me, and I was enclosed in the four walls of my new freedom." *The Seven Storey Mountain* was published in 1948 and quickly became a bestseller in a world still reeling from the shock of World War II and acutely aware of the need for God's help in the face of human evil.