

## May 29/22 - Small Group Questions “Sacramental Mission” – Leader’s Guide

### **Read 2 Corinthians 2:14 - 3:6**

1. Because of the Incarnation (that God became human in Jesus), there is now the notion of the sacramentality of creation. That is, the material world can convey the spiritual and invisible reality of the divine. How does the sacramentality of creation impact the way we interact with other people and with the world around us?

*We can take seriously the physical world as being supercharged with sacramental meaning. Take for example pieces of art. Art is good in and of itself. Art signals something beyond itself by also pointing to itself. The physical world can be said to be God's artistic expression of Himself. Creation is not just a means to express God's personality; creation itself is God's personality in physical form -- ordered, meaningful, informative, beautiful, logical, practical. This means that we should be responsible for our bodies, take other people's bodies seriously, steward the natural world, the earth, the material resources we have, our relationships, etc.*

2. Paul used sacramental language in describing the church in Corinth as a letter that is read by all. How does the local church as a "letter" convey God's message of good news to the world?

*The church, composed of many Christians, conveys the message that God is reconciling all people to Himself by first reconciling people to other people in a community. How Christians together then behave and live out this good news of reconciliation will be read by all. But if Christians are not together in the first place, the message of reconciliation is lost and cannot be conveyed, apart from Christians being together physically.*

### **Read John 13:1-5, 34-35**

1. The mission of the church comes out of the sacramental life and practice of the church. That is, the church is sent out on mission from out of baptism and Eucharist. First, how does baptism shape the mission of the church?

*We can think of Jesus' baptism as His initiation into His public ministry on earth. Among other things, like Jesus, baptism affirms us to be God's children, embraced and welcomed as God's own. And as God's children, we follow after our Father's enterprise and trade into the world to be about His business of new creation. This means becoming like and in the nature of God on earth. Jesus' baptism also filled Him with the Holy Spirit. We are likewise filled with the Spirit to carry out the supernatural works of God in the world as intermediaries of heaven to earth, and earth to heaven. We are empowered to be godlike, to be godly, to be like Jesus everywhere for the business of the new creation to be seen and experienced by all the world wherever the Church exists.*

2. Immediately after having communion and washing His disciples' feet, Jesus sent His disciples on mission with a new command: love one another just as He has loved them. That is, Jesus showed them through the sacraments of communion and feet washing how

we ought to love one another. How does the Eucharist shape the mission of the church?

*The Eucharist dramatizes the sacrificial death and selfless love of Jesus on the cross. The mission of the Church therefore is about giving up ourselves for the other, to die to ourselves for the good and life of the other. The Eucharist is also about hosting a meal for others to be welcomed at the table. It evokes hospitality, generosity, and welcome of others. The Eucharist is the Church's table manners, the ethic of hospitality and welcome of the stranger.*