

#### **A ABRAHAM: Believe by faith.**

- ❖ What did Jesus mean by the expression “seeing my day” (Jn. 8:56)?
- ❖ Abraham was aware that the promise given to him (Gen. 22:18) did not refer only to his abundant descendants. It referred to the seed promised to Eve, that is, to the Savior of the world (Gen. 3:15).
- ❖ Unbeknownst to him, Isaac represented Jesus, ascending the mountain carrying the wood on which he was to be sacrificed (Gen. 22:6).
- ❖ Only when he was stopped from sacrificing his son, and the latter was replaced by a ram, did Abraham understand the mission of the Savior (Gen. 22:11-14). By faith, he saw the day of Jesus Christ (His redemptive death), believed, and rejoiced.

#### **B MARY: Believe and give thanks.**

- ❖ There were several reasons that led Mary to offer Jesus an expensive perfume, and anoint him with it (Jn. 12:1-3):
  - Jesus had forgiven her sins (Lk. 7:44-48)
  - Jesus had raised her brother from the dead (Jn. 11:1-2)
  - Jesus had spoken of his own death (Jn. 12:7)
- ❖ Simon, the host, thought only of her sins (Lk. 7:39). Judas thought only of the benefit he could have gained from such a costly gift (Jn. 12:4-6).
- ❖ But Jesus knew the hearts of all. He made Simon see his lack of gratitude. He told Judas not to use the poor as an excuse.
- ❖ He had only words of affection for Mary. He rewarded her faith by reminding her that her sins were forgiven, and he praised her action before Judas and the others.

#### **C PILATE: Believe and yield.**

- ❖ After hearing Jesus speak about the truth, Pilate was convinced of his innocence (Jn. 18:37-38).
- ❖ Later, he again declared that Jesus had committed no crime (Jn. 19:4). He even tried to appeal to the humanity of the crowd, and again declared his innocence (Jn. 19:5-6).
- ❖ But the climax came when he learned that Jesus claimed to be the Son of God. Pilate panicked (John 19:7-8). As he talked to Jesus, he became convinced of the reality of this claim (John 19:9-11). If Jesus was who He claimed to be, he had to make a choice: believe Him and let Him go; or reject Him and let Him die.
- ❖ The pressure of the mob was stronger than his own conviction. He believed, but he gave in to the pressure. He lost his eternal life to preserve his power (John 19:15-16). Will you deny your faith to please those around you?

#### **D THOMAS: Believing by seeing.**

- ❖ Thomas was not present when Jesus appeared in the upper room after his resurrection (John 20:19, 24). Although the apostles and other witnesses assured him that they had seen the resurrected Jesus, Thomas did not believe them. Instead of accepting their testimony, he set his own conditions for belief (John 20:25).
- ❖ Despite his unbelief, Jesus gave him new evidence by appearing before him, answering the exact doubt he had expressed, and inviting him to believe (Jn. 20:26-27).
- ❖ Even with all the evidence God gives us to believe, there is always room for doubt. It is our choice to accept that evidence and believe in Him.

#### **E YOU AND I: Believing without seeing.**

- ❖ What evidence does God give us to believe in Him?
  - *Nature*: Although imperfect and affected by sin, nature teaches us the intelligent design with which it was endowed by its Creator.
  - *The Word of God*: In the Bible we find abundant testimonies of the powerful works of God in history and in people. We have in it, especially, the testimony of Jesus himself.
  - *Prophecies*: The fulfillment of prophecies that announced historical events many centuries before their fulfillment (Greece invading Persia; Tyre devastated; the destruction of the Temple of Jerusalem; etc.)
  - *Personal Experience*: How is our heart transformed? How have we seen God's hand at work? What answers do we get to our prayers?
- ❖ To believe, in short, is to see a greater reality that is beyond our immediate circumstances.