

- 6 *Zechariah 9*
The king riding into Jerusalem on a donkey is another example of an Old Testament prophecy being fulfilled in the life of Jesus, emphasising once more the hidden depths of the meaning of the scriptures. Does this have an impact on you regarding how the Bible can speak into your life today?
- 7 *1 Timothy 1*
The risk of false teachers leading people astray was a big concern for Paul regarding the Ephesian church. How do we guard against this today? How do we *know* whether the teaching we hear is true or false?
- 8 *1 Timothy 2*
Any possible ‘outrage’ at what some might see as sexist teaching may obscure some of the other details here. Paul writes, “there is one mediator between God and man – Christ Jesus” (v.5). What are the implications of this verse for the way Christians view other religions?
- 9 *1 Timothy 3*
How would you select a new vicar? Would you prefer it if the bishop (or appropriate senior officer in your own wider church hierarchy) simply placed someone in the position?
- 10 *Psalms 77*
Did you notice the shift in pronouns from I/me to God? Might this help you when you’re feeling downhearted?

Closing

*Light a candle, and quietly reflect on the discussion you’ve had, and any difficult matters that may have arisen.
Close by saying together the Lord’s Prayer.*

SACRED

Group Resources

Month 19

Opening Prayer

May the strength of God pilot us,
May the power of God preserve us,
May the wisdom of God instruct us,
May the hand of God protect us,
May the way of God direct us,
May the shield of God defend us.
May the host of God guard us against the snares of evil
and the temptations of the world.

May Christ be with us, Christ before us, Christ in us, Christ over us.
May thy salvation, Lord, be always ours this day and for evermore.
Amen

(St. Patrick, 389-461)

Review of Volume 2

- 1 Now that you have completed all the readings in volume 3 of SACRED, what have been your highlights from these last seven months? Which book(s) did you enjoy the most?
- 2 Two themes have been a feature of this volume might be summarized as 'Monastery' and 'Mission'. That is, on the one hand a set of principles governing our spirituality, our lifestyle and our behaviour, and on the other hand, a desire, on the strength of such a deep rooted rule of life, to seek to reach others with the gospel.

As a group, spend some time thinking of some specific ways in which the two themes have come to the surface.

General Question

- 1 Is there one specific thing that God has laid on your heart during this month's readings? What action will you take?

Further Ideas

As usual, the intention is not to work through all of these ideas, just to take on some of them as the group chooses.

- 1 *Psalm 70*
Part of the church's mission is to be a 'magnifying glass' to the world around us, revealing the Lord (see v.4).
How well does your church and its services do this?
- 2 *Psalm 71*
Archbishop George Carey commented that the church is 'one generation away from extinction'. Do you agree?
If so, what can the church do to combat this?
How might *you* get involved?
- 3 *Zechariah 1-6*
The first part of Zechariah describes a series of strange visions that the prophet had. What did you make of this way of God communicating? Does he still do so today?
- 4 *Zechariah 2*
The prophet speaks of Jerusalem as a city 'without walls' (v.4) so that all can be welcomed there, even though the temple would itself be rebuilt.
What about today? Should a church aim to have no 'walls'?
Is there ever a danger that a church 'without walls' can cease to be a church at all? In your own church, which walls would you keep and which would you want to knock down?
- 5 *Zechariah 8*
Zechariah offers that lovely picture of peace being restored with children playing again on the city streets.
Do projects such as *Operation Christmas Child* inspire you to risk doing something to make a difference?
What kind of causes might especially inspire you?