

Chinese Martyrs Catholic Church
Bible Sharing Program 2023-24
Session #5: The Six Seals Broken Open (Rev 6)

CSB = Ignatius Catholic Study Bible
 CCSS = Cath Commentary on Sacred Scriptures
 BSP04 = 2004-05 BSP notes SN = Special notes
 NAB = New American Bible
 CSSN = Catholic Scripture Study notes
 LS = Dr. Hahn's Lamb's Supper

<p>A</p>	<p><u>Overview</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • After Jesus has called John to “Come ... and I will show you what must happen afterwards” (4:1), insights about the present and the future are revealed: what will happen after the opening of each of the seven seals (chp 6); how God is taking care of his people (chp 7); visions of seven trumpets and accompanying disasters that announce the impending fulfilment of God’s plan (chps 8-9). It is only in chapter 10 that the contents of the scroll (5:1) are revealed (10:2). • The timing of the seven seals and seven trumpets. • The scroll is locked under the seven seals, implying that the covenant contains blessings and curses, the seven penalties of betraying the covenant: seven seals, seven trumpets, seven bowls. • The first four seals reveal four major calamities: invasion, civil war, famine, death; the fifth seal reveals the cries of the martyrs; the sixth seal reveals the two cosmic signs preceding Judgement Day: earthquake, the sun and the moon changing colours. 	<p>6:1-17</p> <p>CCSS p 119</p> <p>CCSS p 135</p> <p>BSP 04 # 3F</p>	<p>Lv 26:3-4,14-15,18,21,24 6:1-8</p>
<p>B</p>	<p><u>Opening of the First Four Seals – The Four Horsemen</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When the Lamb breaks open the scroll, each of the seven seals is accompanied by a vision. A white horse and its rider carrying a bow, “given a crown, ... rode forth victorious to further his victories”, appear with the first seal. The second seal, a red horse and its rider with a “huge sword”, who is given the power to take away peace from earth and causes people to slaughter one other, represents civil war. The third seal brings a rider on a black horse, holding a scale in his hand to measure food and drink ration, represents famine. The fourth seal brings a rider named “Death”, riding on a pale green horse, represents death. • The four horses and riders that bring various frightening 	<p>6:1-8</p> <p>CCSS 6:1-8, CSB</p>	<p>Zc 1:7-17; 6:1-8</p>

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	<p>consequences on earth should be viewed together as a single picture; this demonstrates the calamities resulted from the work of Satan and sins committed by humanity. God has temporarily allowed chaos and human sufferings. This represents, on the one hand, God's divine judgment against the world, and on the other, so that God's plan of eradicating evil, saving His people, and rebuilding Jerusalem might be fulfilled. The four living creatures' cries of "come forward" always precede the calamities; representing everything must happen according to God's plan; everything is in the palms of His hands.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All these had, indeed, happened during John's time, but will continue to happen throughout human history. Before God's divine judgment, the most important thing is to present God with a repenting heart. • A sobering thought: Both "good" and "bad" people bear the consequences of human sinfulness. How should Christians face this troubling fact? 	<p>CCSS 6:1, 7-8 Rm 1:24-32, Ps 81:11-17</p> <p>Ps 51:19</p> <p>Heb 12:4, 1Pt 2:19-20</p>	
<p>C</p>	<p><u>The Fifth Seal – The Cries of the Souls of the Martyrs</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Blood represents life. In the OT, when animals were sacrificed, the blood was poured at the base of the altar. The sacrifice is made in exchange of deliverance of human life. This also foreshadows Christ's sacrifice on the cross. • The martyrs have given up their lives to testify for the truth = pouring their own blood beneath the altar; offering themselves to God. Their blood "cries out in a loud voice" to God and implores God to interfere; to save His people and redress injustice. • The cries of the martyrs do not desire revenge since it is against Jesus' teaching of loving one's enemies. "Revenge" – to redress injustice – is God's alone, "vengeance is mind". 	<p>6:9-11</p> <p>CCSS 6:9</p> <p>CCSS 6:10</p> <p>CCSS 6:11, Lk 6:27-29, 35-36; 23:34, Acts 7:60; Rm 12:19-21</p>	<p>Lv 17:11</p> <p>Gen 4:10 (Heb 12:24), Hab 1:2</p>

