

Chinese Martyrs Catholic Church
Bible Sharing Program 2023-24
Session #6: The Encouraging & Exciting Visions
Preceding the Opening of the Seventh Seal (Rev 7)

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"> Chapter seven is an interlude between the sixth and seven seals, just as 10:1 – 11:14 is the interlude between the sixth and seventh trumpet calls. Two visions are presented in an interlude that encourages and nourishes the hope of Christians: 1. A flashback to God's protection; 2. A preview of what awaits God's people on the other side of the great tribulation of this life, a vision that shows how the people are flourishing under God's protection and serving God day and night. 	<p>7:1-17</p> <p>CSB</p> <p>CCSS p 137</p>	
<p>B</p>	<p><u>One Hundred and Forty Thousand People Marked with the Seal</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> "After this, I saw ..." – indicates the sequence of John's visions, that is, the visions from the sixth seal followed by those of the seventh seal, not the order in which the events unfold. John sees the four angels who were given power over "the four corners of the earth" (i.e. the whole world). The angels are "holding back the four winds" of God's judgment and anger and "were given the power to damage the land and the sea". However, another more powerful angel, who has received "the seal of the living God", commands the four angels to wait, "do not damage the land or the sea or the trees", until "we put the seal on the foreheads of the servants of our God". "Put the seal on" means: 1. A cultural practice of the time that indicates ownership; 2. OT foretells the importance of baptism; 3. The imperative of our call to evangelization. 	<p>7:1-8</p> <p>7:1 CCSS</p> <p>7:1-3 CCSS</p> <p>CCSS, CSB 14:1, Jn 3:5, Mt 28:19</p>	<p>Zc 6:5</p> <p>Ezk 9:3-6</p>
<p>C</p>	<p><u>Who are God's Servants?</u></p> <p>12 tribes x 12 Apostles represent all of God's chosen people in OT and NT. Then, multiply that by 1000, a number that connotes a large number as well as the strongest unit of an</p>	<p>7:4-8</p> <p>CCSS, CSB</p>	<p>Nb 31:14, 48</p>

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	army. This portrays the victorious Church after battle.		
D	<p><u>The Universal Character of God’s People and the Shepherd Lamb</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> This vision of heaven is the vision of the victorious Church; a great multitude “no one could count”, “from every nation, race, people, and tongue”. The people who “have survived the time of great distress, they have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb”. In addition to the apocalyptic genre and foreshadowing of events that will happen on Judgment Day, the distinctive writing style of Revelation demonstrates the author’s expert use of literary techniques, thus, it is worthy to be considered a literary masterpiece. The visions are explained in the voice of a wise person; a technique commonly used in apocalyptic literature. When the elders explain to John who the people wearing white robes are, the author expertly switches to poetry in the response. This effectively demonstrates the human aspirations of heaven. This “preview” or sneak peek, inserted here between the two seals, serves to encourage readers. The real and detailed vision of heaven will be introduced in chapter 21. This brief preview of heaven includes three events: those who “stand before God’s throne and worship him day and night in his temple (Gk naos)”; will no longer be harmed and suffer pain; God and the Lamb will care and comfort them. 	<p>7:9-17</p> <p>7:9 CCSS</p> <p>7:14 CCSS, SN1</p> <p>CCSS</p> <p>CCSS, 1Tim 5:16-17; Jn 1:14, 10:11,14</p>	<p>Gen 12:3, 17:4, 22:17</p> <p>Dan 7:25, 12:1,7 Dan 12:10, Lv 8:15, 14:14</p> <p>Ezk 37:26-28 Ruth 3:7-9 Is 49:10 Gen 48:15, Ps 23</p>

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Special Notes:

1. "The great distress" of 7:14 alludes to a prophecy in the book of Daniel about "a time unsurpassed in distress". This period will last "for a time, two times, and half a time" (Dn 7:25, 12:7). In Revelation, these periods are referred to as "forty-two months" (11:2); "one thousand two hundred and sixty days" (11:3, 12:6); "one year, two years, and half a year" (12:14; "forty-two months" (13:5). "3.5" represents half of the perfection and entirety of "7", signalling that all these temporary trials have been allowed by God. This can also be seen as the Church's ultimate trial throughout her entire history (12:6). This is also the Church's most important trial before the Last Day.