1. **Luke 3:3-9**

* What might the “axe” represent in this passage?
* What might be the “coming wrath” in your opinion that John is talking about, that is motivating the people to “flee” to John and repent?
* What does John ask them to do to show they have truly repented?
* What do we as Catholic’s call our voluntary actions which demonstrate outwardly we have truly repented (a single word)?
* What will happen to those who choose not to repent?
* **Malachi 3:1-24**
* Who might be this “messenger” the Lord is “sending” in **Malachi**?
* What will this “messenger” do, and how does it relate to the **Isaiah** passage John quotes in **Luke**?
* What promises in **Malachi** might motivate a person to repent, name a few verses that stand out to you?
* What does God promise to his people if they “return” to him?
* What will the Israelites “distinguish between”, upon the Lords coming?
* What is going to happen to “all the arrogant and evildoers”?
* What might be the “book”, **Malachi** speaks of in **verse 16**?
* **Exodus 32:30-34, Psalm 69:29, Philippians 4:1-3, Revelation 20:12-15**
* Upon reflecting on all these passages, what is the difference between those whose names are in the “book” and those whose names have been “blotted from the book”?
* At the end of **Malachi**, whom is God sending to the people?
* For what purpose is this “prophet” being sent?
* At the end of **Malachi**, how is the “day of the Lord” described?
* If you had stumbled upon John the Baptist while traveling during his time and knew the scriptures we just went over, what do you believe you would have done upon hearing his message?

1. **Luke 3:10-14**

* How did the crowd who saw and heard John the Baptist respond to his message?
* What did he recommend a “soldier” do, and does his recommendation surprise you?
* What did John the Baptist recommend the “tax collectors” do?
* What did John the Baptist recommend all others do and what does this say to you?
* **St. Cyril of Alexandria** (378 AD – 444 AD) *Commentary on Luke Sermon 2*

“And of these it was that God spoke also by the voice of Ezekiel, ‘And I will take out of their flesh the heart of stone, and will give them a heart of flesh, that they may know Me, that I am the Lord.’ And the blessed Baptist apparently calls them stones, because they as yet knew not Him Who is by nature God, but were in error, and in their great folly worshipped the creation instead of the Creator, but they were called , and became sons of Abraham, and acknowledged, by believing in Christ, Him Who is by nature God. But that he may benefit in a still higher degree those that hear him, the blessed Baptist brings forward something more: ‘But already even the axe is laid at the root of the trees.’ But by the axe in this passage, he signifies the sharp wrath which God the Father brought upon the Jews for their wickedness towards Christ, and the audacious violence: for the wrath was brought upon them like an axe.’”

**Second Quote**

“The blessed Luke has introduced three classes of men making inquiry of John: the multitudes, the tax collectors, and thirdly, the soldiers: and as a skillful physician applies to each malady a suitable fitting remedy, so also the Baptist gave to each mode of life useful and becoming counsel, bidding the multitudes in their course towards repentance practice mutual kindness: for the tax collectors, he stops the way to unstrained extractions: and very wisely tells the soldiers to oppress no one, but be content with their wages.”

* **Catechism 853, 1459-1460, 1033-1037**
* Please share a message or thought that stood out to you today in this study with the group.