1. **Romans 8:18-21**
* Consider all the things you have suffered during “this present time” here on earth and share how it is “nothing compared with the glory to be revealed for us”?
* What do you believe Paul is saying when he states, “for creation was made subject to futility”?
* What is the “hope” for creation according to Paul?
* How can one “be set free from slavery to corruption and share in the glorious freedom of God” while on earth, or is this just a thing to come?
* What do you think it might mean to “share in the glorious freedom of the children of God”, please give an example?
* **Catechism 1250, 1828**
* Consider what we learned and discussed with one another last week regarding the word “Abba” and share how you see it tying in with **today’s reading** and the **Catechism**.
1. **Romans 8:22-27**
* According to Paul, why do we who have “the first fruits of the Spirit”, “groan within ourselves”?
* **Galatians 5:22**
* What are the “first fruits of the Spirit”?
* According to Paul in **Romans** what comes to “aid our weakness”?
* **Catechism 1830-1832**
* What helps sustain our moral life as a Christian, according to the **Catechism**?
* **St. Jerome (347 AD – 420 AD)** *Letter 14 -Section 10*

O wilderness, gladdened with God's special presence! What keeps you in the world, my brother, you who are above the world? How long shall gloomy roofs oppress you? How long shall smoky cities immure you? Believe me, I have more light than you. Sweet it is to lay aside the weight of the body and to soar into the pure bright ether. Do you dread poverty? Christ calls the poor blessed. Does toil frighten you? No athlete is crowned but in the sweat of his brow. Are you anxious as regards food? Faith fears no famine. Do you dread the bare ground for limbs wasted with fasting? The Lord lies there beside you. Do you recoil from an unwashed head and uncombed hair? Christ is your true head. Does the boundless solitude of the desert terrify you? In the spirit you may walk always in paradise. Do but turn your thoughts there and you will be no more in the desert. Is your skin rough and scaly because you no longer bathe? He that is once washed in Christ needs not to wash again. To all your objections the apostle gives this one brief answer, **Romans 8:18** “**The sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall come after them, which shall be revealed in us.**” You are too greedy of enjoyment, my brother, if you wish to rejoice with the world here, and to reign with Christ hereafter.

* **St. Chrysostom (347 AD – 407 AD)** *Homily 14 on Romans* – *verse 23*

If the first fruits are enough to free us from our sins and give us righteousness and sanctification, consider how wonderful the whole inheritance must be. If the creation, devoid as it is of a mind and reason and therefore ignorant of these things, nevertheless groans, much more should we groan as well. Next, so as not to give any comfort to the heretics, he says that we do not groan because of inadequacies of the present system but because we desire something which is much better.

* Reflect on **St. Jerome’s** and **St. Chrysostom’s** words and what we heard today in **Romans** and share a thought that comes to mind that encourages you with the group.