



WEEK TWENTY-SEVEN

Chapter Thirteen: The Descent of the Holy Spirit.

Read the text and study the two paintings. In the painting by Muziano, the reds predominate with the blues and golds added for striking contrast. Take a look at the details. This is filled with people; there are more than sixty! Imagine Muziano's task in painting so many people into the scene! The painting has darkened over time.

This painting of Pentecost by van der Werff is decidedly dark. He obviously wanted to emphasize the miraculous light of the tongues of fire. Take a careful look at the expressions on the faces. Where are the Apostles looking? Where is Our Lady looking? Find the Apostles looking towards the source of the tongues of fire. Find the man with the outstretched arms.

There is so much to say about Overbeck's painting of Pentecost. Although the background shows the Descent of the Holy Spirit, the overall emphasis of the painting is on the Sacrament of Baptism. At the very top, in the center of the border, there is a scene in the medallion. (In art, a circular decorated piece is called a "medallion.") Inside the medallion, we see Our Lord's baptism. At the bottom of the right border, below the cross and the serpent, we see Our Lord with Nicodemus. The Gospel tells us that Jesus told him, "Unless a man be born of water and the Holy Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God" (John 3:5). There is more wonderful symbolism about the Sacrament of Baptism that can be found in the bottom border. To the left, we see Noe (Noah) and his family entering the ark. Only those who entered the ark were saved. To the right, we see the parting of the Red Sea and Moses leading the Israelites through to safety. The Fathers of the Church explain that both these represent "prefigures" of the necessity of Baptism to be saved.

Jean Restout's painting of the Third Glorious Mystery imagines the Holy Spirit's arrival being accompanied by an explosion! Isn't it amazing how the different artists portray the start of the Church? Notice in Restout's smaller painting how his image of the Holy Spirit is portrayed. Don't you think he achieved a wonderful depiction of the Third Person of the Blessed Trinity's supernatural visitation?

Parent: You have completed the Third Quarter of the course.

Please give your child a grade based on his attention to the lessons.
Please write the grade on the Third Quarter Report Form.

FOURTH QUARTER

WEEK TWENTY-EIGHT

Chapter Fourteen: The Assumption

Read the text and study the first three paintings in this chapter. The first painting by di Bartolo is a gentle, beautiful painting showing the love of Our Lord for His mother. This work is more than six hundred years old. It is very much Byzantine in style, closely resembling an Eastern icon. However, this was the time when Western art would begin to change. There is a departure from the flat, one dimensional icon style. Notice the roundness of facial features to make the painting appear more lifelike. The gold of the halos and the blues dominate. How many angels are in the painting? Do you notice the outline of their wings? The outline and golden details throughout the painting are goldleaf.



Andrea del Castagno's work was done fifty years after di Bartolo's. Notice the increase of realism in this piece. There is more dimension and contour. Pause to study the folds of Our Lady's mantle. Del Castagno's use of light and shade (*chiaroscuro*) effectively show the folds of the fabric. Look at the roses in the open tomb. The rose is considered the queen of flowers. It is most appropriate for the tomb to be filled with roses for the Queen of Heaven. Tradition tells us that when the Apostles opened the tomb of the Blessed Mother, her body was not there. Instead, the tomb was filled with roses.

Study the faces in the beautiful painting by Carracci. The red, the gold, and the pink clothes look like satin as they reflect the light. How many human faces? How many angel faces do you see?

WEEK TWENTY-NINE

Chapter Fourteen: The Assumption

The famous painting of the Assumption by Botticini is beloved by so many! Take the time to study each of the four levels. What is everyone doing on each level? Do you see differences in each level? Take a careful look at the closeup detail on page 94. Are they all angels? What are the dominant colors? in Heaven? on earth?

In the Van Dyke painting, look at the details of the Blessed Mother as well as the details of the angels. What is each angel holding? Take note of the cherub who tugs Our Lady's blue sash. Tradition states that St. Thomas, the doubter, was away when Our Lady died. In order that he would not doubt the Assumption, the Blessed Virgin threw him the blue sash of her garment.

As you look at the painting by de Champaigne, note its realistic qualities. Then go back to the first painting of this chapter and to each of the rest of the paintings. Note the progression in realism over the 250 years when each of these were painted. As the artists developed their style and perspective, they taught their apprentices. The apprentices went on to become master painters who discovered further techniques to improve their painting. In the glossary, look up the definition for "foreshortening" and "focal point."

Simon Vouet's painting is a fine one to study the facial expressions contained in it. Read the text of the first paragraph and then determine which of the faces are looking into the tomb and which are seeing Our Lady's Assumption. Truly, they are so caught up in the magnificent miracle that they can't turn their eyes away even for a moment to alert the others.

WEEK THIRTY

Chapter Fifteen: The Coronation.

Read the text and study the first four paintings. Notice the details in the first painting by Jacopo di Cione. Note the early date of the painting. His painting is very much in the style of Eastern or Byzantine art. It has the likeness of an icon. Linear perspective in Western art had not yet been developed. Linear perspective is the artistic technique which makes a picture look "real," giving the picture depth and dimension. Linear perspective in Western painting is controlled by what is called the "vanishing point." The technique was invented by Renaissance painters to draw your eye and mind into the picture. The talented artist is able to involve you in the painting and to keep your eye exploring the work even into its depths. A viewer may conclude that because perspective had not yet been perfected, this must account for the difference in the size of the angels and saints in comparison to Our Lady and Our Lord. This may be true, but there is another reason for the difference. In iconography, the painting is set up so that the most important parts of the painting are made larger. It is for this reason that the size of Jesus and Mary are far larger than the rest. What the artists of the fourteenth century lacked in linear perspective, they made up for in their realistic attention to detail. Notice the patterns in the painting: on the fabric of the robes, the trim, the background, the carved overhang.