

THE BIG 3

How To Be a Christ-Like Leader

Leader's Guide



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A NOTE TO THE LEADER

Thank you for agreeing to lead this Bible study and to model what it means to be a Christ-like leader to those in your study.

The Goal

The goal of this study is to help participants see themselves as leaders on campus, seeking to imitate the leadership of Jesus Christ.

The Bible study goes about this goal in three direct ways:

- 1.) Chapter 1 focuses on what it takes to be a leader. Rather than skills or talents, leadership is about the witness we exhibit through our character.
- 2.) Chapters 2-5 concentrate on how to build a foundation for leadership. Simply, it challenges the participants to take on FOCUS' "Big 3": chastity, sobriety and excellence, so that they can be leaders by example through their moral authority.
- 3.) Finally, chapter 6 presents a vision for leadership. It gives them guiding principles in their quest to lead others to Jesus Christ.

Preparing for the Study

- Give yourself time before the study to think and pray about the material. You will be a much better Bible study leader if these truths have taken root in your heart. The group will not go much deeper than you do.
- Work through the Leader Guide on your own and make notes in the margins about how you want to ask particular questions or how you want to emphasize certain points.

- Anticipate how your group might respond to the content. Some sections will need more clarification than others. Perhaps your group will want to spend more time discussing a particular point that is especially relevant.
- There will be some sections and questions in each chapter that will not be in the Student Guide. This will allow you as the leader to have some more material to go through during the study. These sections and questions are available in this Leader Guide. Be sure to include them each week in the study.

Leading the Study

- Be sure every person in your group has the Student Guide. *This series assumes that they have completed the Student Guide before they come each week.*
- Emphasize that the study is not a lecture, but a discussion. Some will participate more than others, but no one person ought to drown out the others.
- Encourage each member to apply the study questions in a personal way. Say the question is, “How does the call to servant-leadership impact your friendships?” Rather than, “I should be more helpful,” a more personal answer would sound like this: “I am called to anticipate and to meet their needs in whatever way I can. I won’t have the answer for every situation, but what I can do is look for opportunities to respond as a servant. To begin with, I should make time to spend with my friends rather than just squeeze them between the cracks in my academic life.”
- Read the opening story out loud with the group for each chapter and spend some time on the discussion questions. This will take some time, but it will provide a light start to the meeting. “Diving in” too quickly might lead to cramps and injuries.
- Don’t be afraid of disagreements. These can lead to growth and further discussion outside the group. If you are at a standstill, move the group along and explain that God may lead them in a certain direction later in the series. At the same time, if it is a disagreement on Church doctrine, don’t be afraid to stand up for what the Church teaches as truth.
- It might be helpful to periodically summarize the topics you’ve discussed and give a preview of what’s ahead. This gives continuity to the study and helps draw together distinct ideas throughout the series.

On How to Use the Leader Guide

- Most chapters begin with a story. We recommend that you have members of the study read a paragraph at a time as you go around in a circle.
- The remainder of each chapter will include Scriptural verses, discussion questions and quotes to help you create a conversation on the topic and content in the chapter.
- The Leader Guide that you hold includes all of the instructions you will need to lead the study along with snapshots of every page in the Student Guide. Please see an example from your Leader Guide below to see how this works:

6 *Ask: Could I have two volunteers—one volunteer to read Philippians 3:17 and another to read 2 Timothy 3:10-11?*

When St. Paul writes his letters to various Churches, he instructs them on what is important for leadership.

6 **Read Philippians 3:17 and 2 Timothy 3:10-11**

7 What is Paul saying about his style of leadership? What is it based on?

5

7 *Ask: What is Paul saying about his style of leadership? What is it based on?*

Answer: Ultimately, leadership is based our character—who we are, not what we can do. Paul’s leadership is based on modeling for others what it means to be a Christian. It is leadership first and foremost by witness. As Pope Benedict XVI has said, “To evangelize means: to show the path [to Christ]— to teach the art of living.”

- In the example above, the number 6 prompts you to ask one participant to read Philippians 3:17 and another to read 2 Timothy 3:10-11. Purple instructions by the numbers in the Leader Guide indicate that the corresponding sections in the Student Guide include a question, explanation, or story etc. for the group. These are the words you say aloud. Also, notice the number in the box in the bottom right hand corner— this indicates which page of the Student Guide you are viewing.
- As for the actual questions, they are guidelines for you to effectively facilitate the progress of the Bible study. As you prepare for leading the study, you may find that the questions are worded differently than you would ask or that there is a question

or set of questions that you find more helpful in generating discussion around the topic at hand. You may also find that asking the questions in a different order works better. If any of these are the case, please use whatever is more comfortable for you, as long as it covers the same material. The questions we have written are simply a guide. We do have one request if you write new/different questions. Please send them to us at focusequip@focus.org. We are always revising our material and would love your feedback. Who knows...you might help us improve our study, and as a result, touch a soul for all eternity through your suggestion.

- You may also find that there is too much material to cover during one week. This is where experience is helpful. As time goes on, you will be able to determine how much material to cover, what to skip, and what to add that isn't in the Leader Guide. You will also learn which tangents are helpful, and which ones take you off course. We have designed the chapters so that, on average, a typical Bible study can complete the material while having meaningful conversation in the span of one hour. However, you may find that you need more or less, depending on the composition of your group.

Welcome

1 *Ask: Could I have someone please read the “Welcome” section?*

1 Welcome

This Bible study is intended to call women to true leadership in Christ. FOCUS does not simply want students to know Jesus Christ; FOCUS also wants to build up college students who can make an impact for Jesus Christ in the world. This begins on the college campus by equipping women to reach their peers. In this study, we will start out by introducing what true Christian leadership is and what it takes to be a leader. Then, we will focus on FOCUS’ “Big 3” as we discuss what type of witness is needed for a student to stand out amidst her peers on today’s college campuses. Finally, we will look at some practical directions for how a leader acts on the college campus.

1

Chapter One

TAKING THE LEAD

What it Means to Be a Leader

1 *Explain: To start off most chapters, there is an opening story. Probably the best way to use this opening story is if each person reads a paragraph. I will start and then let's go clockwise.*

1 For Starters

At the age of eighteen, a woman named Gonxha from Albania was moved by a desire to become a foreign missionary. She left her home in September 1928 to join the Sisters of Loreto in Ireland. There, she received the name Sister Mary Teresa after St. Thérèse of Lisieux. In December of that same year, she departed for India, arriving in Calcutta in 1929. Sister Teresa was assigned to the Loreto Entally community in Calcutta and taught at St. Mary's School for girls.

In 1937, Sister Teresa made her Final Profession of Vows, becoming, as she said, the "spouse of Jesus" for "all eternity." From that time on she was called Mother Teresa.

She continued teaching at St. Mary's and in 1944 became the school's principal. Noted for her charity, unselfishness, courage, and her capacity for hard work, and bolstered by a natural talent for organization, she lived out her consecration to Jesus in the midst of her companions with fidelity and joy.

On September 10, 1946, during the train ride from Calcutta to Darjeeling for her annual retreat, Mother Teresa received her "inspiration," her "call within a call." On that day, in a way she would never explain, Jesus' thirst for love and for souls took hold of her heart, and the desire to satiate His thirst became the driving force of her life. Over the course of the next few weeks and months, by means of interior locutions and visions, Jesus revealed to her the desire of His heart for "victims of love" who would "radiate His love

on souls.” “*Come be My light,*” He begged her. “*I cannot go alone.*” He revealed His pain at the neglect of the poor, His sorrow at their ignorance of Him, and His longing for their love. He asked Mother Teresa to establish a religious community—the Missionaries of Charity—dedicated to the service of the poorest of the poor.

Nearly two years of testing and discernment passed before Mother Teresa received permission to begin her mission. In 1948, she went for the first time to the slums. She visited families, washed the sores of some children, cared for an old man lying sick on the road, and nursed a woman dying of hunger and tuberculosis. She started each day in communion with Jesus in the Eucharist and then went out, rosary in her hand, to find and serve Him in “the unwanted, the unloved, the uncared for.” After some months, she was joined, one by one, by her former students.

By the early 1960s, Mother Teresa began to send her Sisters to other parts of India. Eventually, she opened houses on every continent and in almost all of the communist countries, including the former Soviet Union, Albania, and Cuba. By 1997, Mother Teresa’s sisters numbered nearly 4,000 members and were established in 610 foundations in 123 countries of the world. She died in September 5, 1997 and was canonized as St. Teresa of Calcutta on September 4, 2016.

(Adapted from http://www.vatican.vax/news_services/liturgy/saints/ns_lit_doc_20031019_madre-teresa_en.html)

For Starters Discussion Questions

Ask: What was it that made St. Teresa of Calcutta a great saint?

Answer: Her work with the poor showed her fidelity to the Gospels. Most of all, she had great love.

Ask: How did St. Teresa of Calcutta’s “call within a call” change her life?

Answer: Instead of teaching wealthy Indian girls in a school, she was called to reach souls by living a radical poverty in the slums of India and caring for the poorest of the poor.

Ask: What was the impact of St. Teresa of Calcutta’s example to both those she taught and to those throughout the world?

Answer: Her former students decided to join St. Teresa of Calcutta in her work. Many

others throughout the world joined her work by: being a sister or brother in her order, volunteering with the sisters of Calcutta, or taking action within their own communities.

Leadership

2 *Ask: Could someone please read Matthew 20:20-28 and Philippians 2:3-10?*

3 *Ask: For Jesus, what does leadership mean?*

Answer: A leader serves others and lays down his life for the sake of others.

4 *Ask: How does this leadership compare to what the world normally associates with leadership?*

Answer: The world thinks of leadership in terms of power. Someone in power is in control of people, money, and resources; leadership isn't a place to serve; it is a place to be served.

Ask: In what ways are you personally challenged by Jesus' vision and example of leadership?

Leadership

In a world that values fame, wealth, and success, St. Teresa of Calcutta proved that true leadership stems from the witness of charity. It is this great love that attracts souls. *This* is the Christ-like leadership that will change the world. In this chapter, we will look at what it means to be a leader in the image of Jesus Christ.

First, let's see what Jesus said about leadership and what kind of leader Jesus was.

2 **Read Matthew 20:20-28 and Philippians 2:3-10**

3 For Jesus, what does leadership mean?

4 How does this leadership compare to what the world normally associates with leadership?

As with many things, the Gospel message turns our whole way of thinking upside down: Jesus' death and humiliation on the cross actually leads to His exaltation. Whoever wishes to be great must become the servant of others.

4

Having What It Takes: Character Versus Gifting

5 *Ask: What is the difference between character and gifting?*

5 Having What It Takes: Character Versus Gifting

When the world thinks of leaders, it often thinks of people who have the most gifts. Our mindset is this: “If I’m a good speaker then I can lead” or “If I am popular and have a social presence then I have what it takes to be a great leader.” Of course, the opposite of this happens as well. We might think, “I am not like him or her” or “I cannot do this or that,” so therefore “I can’t be a leader.”

Leadership involves the use of gifts and talents, but one’s gifts do not *determine* authentic leadership. 4

6 *Ask: Could I have two volunteers—one volunteer to read Philippians 3:17 and another to read 2 Timothy 3:10-11?*

When St. Paul writes his letters to various Churches, he instructs them on what is important for leadership.

6 Read Philippians 3:17 and 2 Timothy 3:10-11

7 What is Paul saying about his style of leadership? What is it based on?

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7 *Ask: What is Paul saying about his style of leadership? What is it based on?*

Answer: Ultimately, leadership is based our character—who we are, not what we can do. Paul’s leadership is based on modeling for others what it means to be a Christian. It is leadership first and foremost by witness. As Pope Benedict XVI has said, “To evangelize means: to show the path [to Christ]—to teach the art of living.”

8 Read this paragraph (leader).

Tell: the Swordsman example

Think of a swordsman. The quality of the sword he possesses is helpful, but if he doesn't know how to use

it, he will be less effective than someone with a short, dull sword who knows how to fight. Furthermore, it does not matter how good your sword is if you do not have the courage or strength to use it well. The same holds true concerning our gifts.

Ask: Based on our discussion about gifts versus character based leadership, do you think anyone can be a leader? Why or why not?

Answer: Anyone who is willing to be a witness and set an example can be a leader. Also, different leadership roles require different gifts; we are not all called to lead in the same way.

9 *Ask: What about the examples of gifts and character from the Bible? Did any example stick out to you?*

10 *Review these Bible characters, then ask: Why do you think God uses the lowly and humbles the mighty?*

Possible Answer: By using the lowly, others can see how powerful God can

8 A leader is not a pointer who says “go that way,” but a pacesetter who says “follow me.” Gifts are important and can be helpful in leadership, but they are just tools.

9 The world is filled with people who have great gifts, but are not good leaders—so is the Bible. (Bible verses are given if you want to look at each example in more depth.)

Eve—She was created in God’s image without Original Sin, but she succumbed to the temptations of the devil.

King Saul—His physical stature surpassed everyone in Israel, but he was not obedient and lost God’s favor (1 Samuel 9:1-2; 1 Samuel 15:1-35).

King Solomon—He was known as the wisest man in the world, but he was plagued by greed and lust. His actions ultimately caused a civil war (Sirach 47:12-25).

On the other hand, the Bible is filled with examples of those who were not gifted that were used by God.

5

10 **Hannah**—She was barren, but she prayed to God and promised to offer her son in service of the Lord. She gave birth to Samuel who was one of the great prophets of the Old Testament (1 Samuel 1:1-28).

Mary—Although she was a poor peasant girl, God chose her to be the mother of His Son.

Apostles—Most of the apostles were uneducated fisherman, and yet these were the men whom Jesus chose to begin His Church and spread His message to the ends of the earth.

5

be. It is because of Him they are effective, and not because of their own merits. This shows us how important God is in the equation, and not just our own talents.

Ask: How do you think the example of St. Teresa fits into the discussion about gifts versus character? What gifts did she have? What do you think attracted people to her more, her character or gifts? Why?

Answer: While St. Teresa was certainly gifted, her sisters and those who knew her most often noted her charity and her humility, two qualities not dependent upon her personal gifts.

Virtue Versus Values

11 *Ask: What is the difference between virtues and values?*

12 *Ask: Could someone please read CCC 1803?*

Virtue Versus Values

11 Our world often talks about what people value. Our Church often talks about virtue. What is the difference between the two and how can it help our understanding of leadership?

Values are *ideas* and *ideals*. Values are principles that we think are correct, but at the same time they can change over time and with experience.

For example, I might value honesty, but when money or pride are on the line, I might not actually be honest.

Virtue is not just thinking correctly, but doing something right and living in the proper way. Virtues don't change over time.

12 *"A virtue is an habitual and firm disposition to do the good. It allows the person not only to perform good acts, but to give the best of himself. The virtuous person tends toward the good with all his sensory and spiritual powers; he pursues the good and chooses it in concrete actions" (CCC 1803).*

In sum, virtues are habits, but not *just* habits. They are habits that help us to do the good. This is often difficult. But over time, as these virtues are built up, we are able to choose the good *consistently*, with joy and with ease.

If we want to be great witnesses and lead through our character, virtue is an absolute must. Lots of people can talk about what they value, but the actions of virtues speak louder than words.

6

Big 3

13 *Read these paragraphs (leader).*

13 Big 3

So far we have looked at what leadership is from a Biblical perspective, and have examined how we can practically live it out through character and virtue. As we saw in the examples above, from Jesus Christ to Bl. Teresa, from Abraham to the Apostles, it is one's character above all else that helps us draw others to us and allows us the opportunity to lead. Character is what sets us above the rest. In this study, we want to look at three virtues that are vital to our character during our time as college students: chastity,

6

sobriety, and excellence. FOCUS refers to these as the "Big 3." By working on these virtues, we will strengthen our witness, build a strong will, and develop clarity of mind that will provide a foundation for our leadership.

Jesus Christ has called us to the light of the world and the salt of the earth. He wants us to let our light shine before men for all to see.

7

14 *Review these action points with your group for the upcoming week.*

Action Point

14 Applying the Scriptures to Your Life

- 1.) Think about who has impacted your life. What have they done that was so effective? How was their witness impactful?
- 2.) Think about how your actions influence others this week.
- 3.) Read a portion of the Gospels and examine how Jesus served others.

7

Chapter Two

REAL LOVE

God's Design for Human Sexuality and the Freedom that Chastity Offers

1 *As the leader, begin this chapter by reading this paragraph.*

1 The first chapter in this Bible study dealt with what it means to be a leader in the image of Jesus Christ. The next four chapters will center on FOCUS' "Big 3": chastity, sobriety, and excellence. These three virtues are difficult to live on the college campus and that is why they are specifically addressed. In the next four chapters, we will explain what these virtues are and discuss how we can live them out, particularly as women.

8

2 *Ask: Could I please have a couple of volunteers to read the story about St. Gianna Molla? (Have the first volunteer read the first half and the second volunteer read the second half)*

2 For Starters

Gianna Beretta was born in Magenta (Milan) on October 4, 1922. As a youth, she willingly accepted the gift of faith and the Christian education which she received from her parents.

She diligently dedicated herself to her studies during the years of her secondary and university education. In addition to these academic pursuits, Gianna lived her faith through generous apostolic service among the youth of Catholic Action, and through charitable work with the elderly and needy as a member of the St. Vincent de Paul Society. After earning degrees in Medicine and Surgery, she opened her own medical clinic.

Through her prayers and those of others, she reflected upon her vocation, which she also considered a gift from God. Having chosen the vocation of marriage, she embraced it with complete enthusiasm and wholly dedicated herself "to forming a truly Christian family."

At the age of 32, she married Pietro Molla on September 24, 1955, in the Basilica of St. Martin in Magenta. She became the mother of three children and with simplicity and equilibrium she harmonized the demands of mother, wife, and doctor with her passion for life.

Early in her fourth pregnancy in September 1961 she started experiencing pain and suffering. She was diagnosed with a large uterine fibroma—a benign tumor—that nonetheless demanded speedy medical attention. Gianna knew continuing the pregnancy would entail great risks to her own life, however, she asked the surgeon to operate to remove the fibroma in such a way that would save the life of the baby she was carrying. She never stopped praying and trusting in God's Providence, and the baby's life was saved. Gianna thanked God and spent the following seven months attending to her duties of mother and doctor with great commitment and strength.

A few days before she was to deliver, Gianna shared the following with her doctor: "If you must decide between me and the child, do not hesitate: choose the child—I insist on it. Save him." On the morning of April 21, 1962, Gianna Emanuela was born by caesarian section. Immediately after the operation, Gianna Sr.'s general condition started to worsen. She had a high fever and terrible abdominal pains caused by septic peritonitis. Despite all human efforts, her condition worsened and on April 28, 1962, at dawn, she was taken back to the family home in Ponte Nuovo where she died at 8 a.m. She was 39 years old.

St. Gianna was beatified by Pope John Paul II on April 24, 1994, during the international Year of the Family.

(Adapted from: http://www.vatican.va/news_services/liturgy/saints/ns_lit_doc_20040516_beretta-molla_en.html)

For Starters Discussion Questions

Ask: What is stood out to you about the story of St. Gianna?

Ask: How is St. Gianna similar to many women today and how is she different?

Answer: Similarities include that she lived in the modern age (just 50 years ago). She was a working mother and had to balance these tasks like many women today.

Differences include her ability to balance her work and family life so well. She also put her family and the life of her unborn child before her work and before herself—even at the risk of

her own life. She is a tremendous model of love as she followed Jesus' words, "Greater love has no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends" (John 15:13).

Made to Love Like God

3 *Read these next two paragraphs (leader).*

St. Gianna's story is ultimately a story of love. Humans are made with a desire to love and to be loved. This is one of the most basic and essential human desires. However, sometimes we're afraid that the thing that we want most, real love, doesn't actually exist. Too often, we settle for a little pleasure that seems like love because we think that the life-long love we desire isn't out there. The good news is that this love we seek is available to us, and that we can experience this true love by following God's plan for our lives, specifically through embracing the virtue of chastity. Chastity gives us the power to love others in the right way.

Made to Love Like God

3 In the last chapter, we briefly explored how Adam and Eve were made in the image of God, the Trinity. Now, we want to see how being made in this image affects how we love.

The opening story about St. Gianna was a great example of love of others both during her life and at her death. Her radical gift of self helps to contrast the Christian view of love with the world's view of love.

4 How does the world define love? What are some characteristics?

5 What are some characteristics of the love that exists within the Trinity?

10

4 *Ask: How does the world define love? What are some characteristics?*

Answer: Love is about emotion or a feeling. Love is something you fall into (and can fall out of). It is not a choice.

5 *Ask: What are some characteristics of the love that exists within the Trinity?*

Answer: Let the students give their thoughts. (Unconditional, total, self-giving, freely given, selfless, fruitful, life-giving, etc...)

Ask: In comparing the love as the world defines it and the love within the Trinity, what are the biggest differences? What are some reasons why we don't love the way the Trinity does?

Ask: How did Gianna love like the Trinity?

Answer: She totally gave herself to her children. She was willing to sacrifice many aspects of her life in order to have a family and in the end was willing to sacrifice her life itself.

What Is Love?

6 *Ask: Could someone please read the quote from Vatican II?*

Sexual love was created to image the love that exists within the Trinity.

What Is Love?

6 *Gaudium et Spes*, a document of Vatican II, says that “man only finds himself in a sincere gift of self” (GS, 24).

10

It is from a document called Gaudium et Spes meaning “Joy and Hope.”

Ask: Do you think that this statement from Gaudium et Spes is true? Why or why not? How does this fit within our call to love as God loves?

Answer: Experiences in our own lives and in the lives of others help to confirm this statement. This is why those who are wrapped up in themselves often feel so empty while someone like Mother Theresa, who gave her whole life to the poor, can be filled with joy. Just as Jesus Christ laid down His life for us, so too are we called to die to ourselves and lay down our lives for others.

7 *Ask: Could I have someone read Genesis 2:24? What does it mean to be “one flesh”?*

Some Possible Answers: A union like that of our soul and body, an intimate union, loving someone as “another self,” the

other person is as your own life.

From your experience do you think this quote from *Gaudium et Spes* is true?

7 **Read Genesis 2:24**

What does it mean to be “one flesh”?

11

Note to Leader: Your goal here is to facilitate a discussion. Other follow-up questions could include: what happens in sexual union? Is it just an act of your body? Is your soul involved? Why do people say, “I gave myself to you” when they talk about sex?

Most people instinctively know that in sex they are giving themselves, soul and body, to the other person. Don't give them all the answers. Have them discuss what they think on the matter. We will give the answers later in this chapter—just get them to start thinking now.

Why Should We Love?

8 *Ask: Could I have someone please read 1 Corinthians 6:13-20?*

Why Should We Love?

8 **Read 1 Corinthians 6:13-20**

11

Ask: Why does Paul call our body “a temple of the Holy Spirit” (v. 19)?

Answer: When Paul calls the body a “temple,” he is using a word that is filled with meaning. This temple is not just any temple. He is referring to the Temple in Jerusalem. Everything was holy and consecrated to God in the Temple. Nothing that was not holy was even allowed inside because the Temple was where God dwelt! (For more on the temple, feel free to have the group look at one or all of these passages: John 2:16; II Chronicles 2:4-6; I Kings 8:10-11; Isaiah 56:7; Psalm 79:1-4.)

9 Ask: According to this passage, why is it wrong for a Christian to indulge in sexual immorality?

9 According to this passage, why is it wrong for a Christian to indulge in sexual immorality?

We may already know that our souls are sacred, but by nature of our membership in the Body of Christ, we must realize that *our bodies are sacred too!* This means that every action of our body is important, because we are acting with the body which contains the Lord!

11

Answer: Paul points out that “Your bodies are members of Christ” (v. 15). Whatever we join to ourselves, we are joining to Christ. What will we do with Christ’s body?

10 Ask: Is it natural or emotionally healthy to “become one flesh” with lots of different people? Why or why not?

10 Is it natural or healthy to “become one flesh” both physically and emotionally with lots of different people? Why or why not?

11 Oxytocin is a hormone that creates a strong emotional attachment. It is secreted during sexual arousal, during the birth process, and while nursing a baby. It has been called the “superglue of the heart.” This hormone is *especially* great in marriage. It allows husbands and wives to stay connected to one another during tough times. In addition to bonding spouses, oxytocin also creates a kind of forgetfulness and it has a tranquilizing effect that encourages nurturing. Think of the intense, forgiving bond between a mother and her child: it’s almost unbreakable.

12

11 Ask: Can someone tell me what oxytocin is?

Note to Leader: Your students might be able to give you a good definition from their reading in the student guide. If not, simply have one of them read the paragraphs on it.

- 12 *Ask: How do you think the quote on oxytocin relates to what St. Paul is talking about and to what Christian marriage is supposed to be?*

In a book on this principle, the co-authors state,

“. . . previous relationship experiences can alter ‘sexual bonding’ by altering the release of the biochemical ‘super-glue’ [oxytocin]. If the relationship history is sufficiently adverse, this study shows that women will lose their ability to bond...(and are)...susceptible to significant injuries from broken bonds.”

—Eric Keroack, MD and John R. Diggs Jr., MD, “Bonding Imperative”

- 12 How do you think this quote relates to what St. Paul is talking about and to what Christian marriage is supposed to be?

12

Answer: Sexual love is meant to be shared with only one person because of the bond that it creates. The language of sex speaks, “total, forever, unconditional,” not “until I fall out of love” or “until someone better comes along” or “for awhile.” To engage in sexual activity with someone to whom you are not committed to for life (your spouse) would be lying with your body!

In marriage, God unites the man and woman together in a sacrament—the two become one flesh. Sexual love in marriage expresses with their body what the couple says on the altar. On the altar, the man and woman give their lives to each other; in sexual union, they make that gift real and visible by giving their bodies to each other. Isn't that beautiful and amazing?

Ask: What damaging effects can this principle have on people? What are some examples of how this can affect women?

Potential Answer: When a guy and girl are sexually active, the effects can be devastating when the relationship ends. Or, we can see this when a wonderful girl stays with a jerk for a boyfriend because of the bond they have formed. Some of this can be explained by oxytocin.

13 Ask: *Could I have someone read CCC 1691?*

The Catechism of the Catholic Church quotes St. Leo the Great on this point:

13 “Christian, recognize your dignity and, now that you share in God’s own nature, do not return to your former base condition by sinning. Remember who is your head and of whose body you are a member. Never forget that you have been rescued from the power of darkness and brought into the light of the Kingdom of God” (CCC 1691).

13

Ask: What are some ways that we can remember our dignity and our deliverance from the power of darkness in regards to chastity?

Answer: One example is wearing a chastity ring to remind yourself of your commitment. Another might be putting up an image of a saint who modeled chastity.

Say: This week we looked at what love is and why we should love in an authentic way. Next week we will examine how to love in this way. It will equip you to face the challenges of trying to live out Christian love in our world.

14 Review the Action Point: Remember to ask the students about them the following week.

Action Point

14 Applying the Scriptures to Your Life

- 1.) Think of ways that you can love others in the right way. Trying to do something small with great love.
- 2.) If you are in a relationship, think of ways that you can show love to your boyfriend in a way that “glorifies God in your body.”
- 3.) Pray every day for the virtue of chastity and a greater love for the opposite sex.

13

Chapter Three

LIVING CHASTITY

How to Practically Live Out Chastity in Our Lives

1 *Ask: Could someone start us off by reading the story?*

1 For Starters

There was once a group of bishops talking on the street. A prostitute, wearing very little clothing, walked by the group. All of the bishops, except for one, looked away from the girl in order to protect themselves from impure thoughts. One of the bishops, when he realized his friend was actually looking straight at the prostitute, said, “Brother, avert your eyes!” The bishop kept looking at the girl, his eyes filling with tears. He saw past her lack of clothing and into her soul. He pitied her because she had been so mistreated by others.

For Starters Discussion Questions

Ask: Which bishop was in the wrong?

Answer: Neither of them. The group of bishops looked away because he knew that to look upon the woman could be a cause of lust for them. The second bishop was able to look upon the woman as a daughter of God who had been hurt and exploited; he was deeply moved with compassion for her. This second bishop loved with a greater love. Some of us will never be able to accomplish that kind of love this side of heaven.

2 *Ask: Could someone read the introductory paragraph?*

2 In the last chapter, we looked at what chastity gives us—the power to love in the right way—and why God calls us to live this way. In this chapter, we will look at how we should live out the virtue of chastity. There are so many complexities in our relationships with the opposite sex. This chapter we will look at some of the practical aspects of chastity from a Biblical perspective so that we can get some of God’s wisdom on the matter. **15**

Pure in Heart

3 *Ask: Could I have someone read Luke 6:45?*

Note to the Leader:

Mark 7:21-23 is also helpful.

Ask: Let's look at how we change our hearts. Could someone read Philippians 4:8?

Ask: How do we think about what is true, honorable, and pure?

Answer: Just like with food, we have to watch what we put into our hearts and our minds. What movies and TV shows are we watching? What magazines do we read? What music do we listen to? Media can—and does—affect the way that we think. Shows, movies, and books model for us how to act in relationships; we naturally copy them for better or worse.

Pure in Heart

Chastity is about so much more than simply *not* having sex before marriage. Chastity is about loving the way that God has called us to love, without selfishness or lust. Before our actions can truly reflect chastity, we have to purify our hearts and minds.

3 Read Luke 6:45

15

Self-Control

4 *Read this paragraph (leader).*

5 *Ask: Could I have a volunteer read the quote from the Catechism?*

Ask: Our culture

tells us to “do what feels right.” But, the Catechism tells us that acting solely based on our passions and what we feel might actually lead to unhappiness. Why is this the case, and how can self-mastery lead to peace?

Self-Control

4 Even though we might know the right thing to do where chastity is concerned, it is still very difficult to love in the right way. That's where the virtue of self-control comes in. A virtue is like any good habit: the more that you practice it, the easier it becomes. Self-control is about putting one's physical desires under the control of reason. This is *key* in the practice of chastity.

5 “Chastity includes an apprenticeship in self-mastery which is training in human freedom. The alternative is clear: either man governs his passions and finds peace, or he lets himself be dominated by them and becomes unhappy” (CCC 2339).

For more on how we are to control our bodies from immorality, read 1 Thessalonians 4:1-8.

15

Answer: What we feel is not always correct. We need to know what is objectively right and then “order” our passions to follow the truth. This is where self-mastery comes in. If you would like to share more on this battle between passions and reason, see Romans 7:14-25.

Practical Things

Emotional Chastity

6 *Ask: Could I have someone please read the paragraph under “Emotional Chastity?”*

Practical Things Emotional Chastity

6 Men and women struggle with chastity in different ways. In general, men are physical and visual. The devil tries to attack these characteristics by tempting men to use women physically and through bombarding men with sexual images. On the other hand, women **15**

in general, are more emotional and relational. The devil tempts us through our relationships (such as gossip and drama among friends) and emotional images (sentimental thoughts and hopes for the future). For us, it’s just as important to guard our hearts as it is to guard our bodies. **16**

7 *Ask: Could someone please read Proverbs 4:23?*

Ask: Why is what Proverbs 4:23 says important in our relationships with guys?

7 Read Proverbs 4:23

Do you find yourself getting too emotionally attached too quickly in a relationship? Do you ever find yourself falling for a guy when he just wants to “hang out?”

Why is what Proverbs 4:23 says important in our relationships with guys?

Answer: It is important to guard our hearts in our relationships with men.

We don’t

want to be so emotionally attached that we can’t see our relationships properly or are completely devastated if we break up.

16

8 *Ask: Could I have someone read the quotation by John Eldredge?*

8 “I have seen far too many young men commit a kind of emotional promiscuity with a young woman. He will pursue her, not to offer his strength but to drink from her beauty, to be affirmed by her and feel like a man. They will share deep, intimate conversations. But he will not commit; he is unable to commit.”

—John Eldredge, *Wild at Heart*

16

Ask: How does it affect women when guys do this?

Answer: It leads them on and breaks their hearts because they put so much of their hearts into the “relationship” only to see things end without a relationship.

Ask: Do you think women are ever guilty of this as well?

Ask: How do you think this applies to flirting with men?

Physical Chastity

9 *Ask: In regards to physical chastity, people often ask, “How far is too far?” From what has been discussed above, what do you think should be our attitude towards chastity in relationships?*

Physical Chastity

9 In regards to physical chastity, people often ask, “How far is too far?” From what has been discussed above, what do you think should be our attitude towards chastity in relationships?

17

Answer: “How far is too far?” is the wrong question. We want to be pure, not just to avoid mortal sin. If you were driving a truck along a narrow mountain road with no guardrails, you wouldn’t want to see how close you could get to the edge.

10 *Ask: What are some ways that could help us remain chaste in our relationships?*

10 What are some ways that could help us remain chaste in our relationships?

17

One way is to make boundaries for yourself. Know exactly where your line is. Commit to being faithful to these boundaries. Also, talk to your boyfriend about them. Talk about how you can keep them together—you can't do it alone! Get a friend to help you be accountable.

Also, as the leader, think about what you will do when your boundaries are being challenged. (Give examples, stories, personal examples.)

Modesty

11 *Ask: In terms of modesty, do you think that the way you dress affects others around you? If yes, how?*

Modesty

When we think of modesty, we usually think of something that they did in the old days, like being covered from head to toe in a shapeless cloth. In reality, modesty is completely relevant to us as modern women. Modesty is first of all about protecting ourselves. It is also about protecting our brothers in Christ, who tend to be more visual and therefore more readily affected by what they see.

11 Do you think that the way you dress affects others around you? If yes, how?

Note to Leader: Get their insight and try to bring out what they think about the issue. Below are some helpful conversational points.

"Purification of the of the heart demands prayer, the practice of chastity, purity of intention and of vision" (CCC 2532).

17

Potential Answers: Men are very visual. If we are dressing to attract that kind of attention, we will get it! But, we may be harming our brothers in Christ in the process!

When you get dressed, look into the mirror and ask yourself what you are trying to emphasize by what you are wearing. If you are wearing really tight and low-cut clothing, that's all guys will notice!

Ask: How do you think the way you dress affects you? Do we dress a certain way to get attention? Do we connect our identity with that attention?

Answer: The way we dress reflects how we view ourselves as well. We can tie our sense of identity to our ability to turn heads and get noticed by dressing provocatively.

Changing Our Lives

12 *Ask: We just looked at three different aspects of chastity, emotional chastity, physical chastity and modesty. What are some ways that we can work on these in order to purify our hearts?*

Changing Our Lives

We just looked at three different aspects of chastity: emotional chastity, physical chastity, and modesty. What are some ways that we can work on these in order to purify our hearts?

18

Ask: How can we work specifically on each of these three aspects in order to purify our hearts?

Answer: Chastity, just like other virtues, may require that we change our lifestyle. This includes:

- Transforming our minds through prayer and examining the way we view ourselves, others, and sex, resolving to see with the eyes of God.
- Changing who we hang out with in order to have good examples, and keeping company with friends who will encourage us in our pursuit of holiness.
- Working on our habits as we pursue to master the virtue of chastity and temperance in all areas of our life.

For more on purity, read CCC 2520-2527.

- 13** *Review the Action Point: Talk about how you can set practical goals and boundaries. Also, share with them the importance of having some kind of accountability system. Encourage them to have a friend periodically ask how they are doing with their boundaries.*

Action Point

13 Applying the Scriptures to Your Life

- 1.) Spend time in prayer this week asking God to help you to dedicate your entire life to Him.
- 2.) Wake up every morning and tell yourself: "I am beautiful! God made me the way that I am and He delights in me!"
- 3.) Think of ways that you can honor your brothers in Christ more: in the way that you dress, talk, and act around them. Make an effort to help them to grow in their relationship with Christ.
- 4.) If you have a boyfriend, know your boundaries in your relationship—make them specific and practical. Find good friends to help you stay faithful to what you decide.

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Chapter Four

SOBER INTOXICATION OF THE SPIRIT

Viewing Alcohol as God Does, and the Value of Sobriety

Note to Leader: This can be a sensitive subject on a college campus. There are many people who think: “what’s the big deal with underage drinking?” or even, “what’s the big deal with getting drunk once in awhile?” Be careful not to come across as judgmental or condemning in your attitude. Emphasize our weakness as human beings, but contrast it with our total reliance on God’s grace. Your goal is to show them that a life lived in sobriety is possible. Perhaps this topic can be introduced with the acknowledgement that there are divergent views on the subject, which is why we want to look to Scripture and the teachings of the Church to clarify the issue.

1 *Ask: Could I have someone read the opening paragraph?*

1 It is a reality that most college students drink, or at least, they face enormous pressures to drink. There are many different opinions and beliefs about drinking: is drinking at *all* permissible? Is it okay to get drunk? Is it okay to get wasted from time to time, if it helps to relieve stress? Or, is it alright to get drunk *every night* if it makes you feel good? Is it okay to drink underage at all? Are certain circumstances more permissible than others? People will give many different answers to each one of these questions. Let’s examine these questions by the light of Scripture and Church teaching in order to get a better grasp of this subject.

19

Is Drinking a Sin?

2 *Say: There were a number of passages in Scripture on alcohol. Let’s look at John 2:1-11.*

Is Drinking a Sin?

Some Christians think that *all* drinking is wrong. Other Christians have no problem with drinking. Many times the Bible is used to back up both views. So, what *is* the truth?

2 **Read the following passages of Scripture: John 2:1-11, Sirach 31: 25-30, Isaiah 25:6, and Galatians 5:19-21**

What do they reveal about God’s attitude towards alcohol use?

19

Ask: Could someone please read John 2:1-11? While they are reading, I want everyone to place themselves in the scene as if you were present at the feast.

Ask: In this passage, Jesus transformed close to 180 gallons of water into wine. Would you have been disturbed by Jesus' actions? Why, or why not?

Ask: How would you describe your attitude towards alcohol?

Ask: What do Jesus' actions in this passage reveal about his stance towards alcohol?

Note to Leader: Reading Matthew 11:16-19 would also be helpful for this discussion. The point of referring to Matt. 11:16-19 is this: Jesus Himself said that He drank; and—we might note—He drank often enough to acquire the reputation of a “drunkard” in the eyes of some. Let God’s Word confront them!

3 *Ask: With all of the passages in mind, how would you sum up the Bible's teaching on how to enjoy alcohol?*

3 How would you summarize the Biblical teaching on the proper enjoyment of alcohol?

“The virtue of temperance disposes us to avoid every kind of excess: the abuse of food, alcohol, tobacco, or medicine. Those incur grave guilt who, by drunkenness or a love of speed, endanger their own and others' safety on the road, at sea, or in the air” (CCC 2290).

20

Note to Leader: Feel free to have

the group go back and read Sirach 31:25-30, Isaiah 25:6 and Galatians 5:19-21.

Answer: The Bible clearly shows that there is no problem with drinking alcohol and using it for enjoyment. However, at the same time it cautions people to not drink in excess because of the effects that drunkenness can have on a person.

Of Age: The Question of Underage Drinking

Note to Leader: While many students can understand the reasons not to get drunk, it is harder to understand why someone cannot drink under the age of 21, especially if they know how to handle alcohol. FOCUS' call for underage students not to drink is a radical call that provides an incredible witness on campus. This section presents a

step-by-step argument against underage drinking. Your job is to take the members through this argument in this section.

4 *Ask: Why are laws put into place?*

Answer:
For the sake of the community or in other words, to promote the common good.

Of Age: The Question of Underage Drinking

Is there any law that is more controversial than underage drinking? Is there any law broken more frequently on college campuses?

In this section, we will explore the issue of sobriety as it involves underage drinking. Is it an issue of morality? Why does our government have such strict laws against it? Is it immoral to break a law? Let's explore Scripture, the reasoning of the Church, logic, and history for some insight.

4 First, why are laws put into place?

5 What is the law on underage drinking?

20

5 *Ask: What is the law on underage drinking?*

Answer: National Minimum Drinking Age Act of 1984 made it illegal for those under 21 to purchase or publically possess alcohol. In regards to consumption of alcohol by those under 21, no law was made nationally. However, every state has its own laws in regards to minors drinking under 21. Some states do not allow it in any circumstance; others allow it in private at the home of a parent/guardian with their consent etc. For state-by-state laws, feel free to check out: https://alcoholpolicy.niaaa.nih.gov/state_profiles_of_underage_drinking_laws.html

6 *Ask: Could someone read for me Romans 13:1-7?*

6 **For a Biblical perspective of following laws, read Romans 13:1-7**

7 What does Paul say about following laws?

7 *Ask: What does Paul say about following laws?*

8 Are there ever laws that should not be followed?

21

8 *Ask: Are there ever laws that should not be followed?*

Answer: Yes, there are. For instance, in ancient Roman times, not worshipping pagan gods. One example in our modern times would be a doctor who refuses to perform an abortion.

9 *Say: Then, the question is: Is underage drinking an unjust law?*

9 Then, the question is: Is underage drinking an unjust law?

10 The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* speaks to this point.

10 *Ask: The Catechism of the Catholic Church speaks to this point. Could someone please read paragraph 2242?*

“The citizen is obliged in conscience not to follow the directives of civil authorities when they are contrary to the demands of the moral order, to the fundamental rights of persons or the teaching of the Gospel...When citizens are under the oppression of a public authority which oversteps its competence, they should still not refuse to give or to do what is objectively demanded of them by the common good; but it is legitimate for them to defend their own rights and those of their fellow citizens against the abuse of this authority within the limits of the natural law and the Law of the Gospel” (CCC 2242).

21

11 *Ask: So, according to the Catechism, when should we not follow civil authorities?*

11 So, according to the Catechism, when should we not follow civil authorities?

1.)

2.)

3.)

Answer:

1. Contrary to moral order

2. Contrary to the

fundamental rights of a person (e.g. food, shelter, clothing, inherit dignity)

3. Contrary to teachings of the Gospel

22

12 *Ask: In looking at the statistics, do you think a lower drinking age would be helpful for morality and the common good?*

12 Drinking alcohol is not a fundamental right like food and shelter etc. and would not be a reason for going against the law. Neither would the Law of the Gospel since nothing specific is stated in the Gospels in regards to drinking age. The only criteria to examine would the moral order (laws which serve to maintain societal order and which support the common good). So the question is, would a lower drinking age would be helpful for morality and the common good?

See the three statistics below:

1. The Centers for Disease Control looked at 49 high quality, peer-reviewed studies of places that changed their drinking age and found conclusively that a 21 minimum drinking age decreases fatalities by 16 percent according to Shults, Ruth, et al. ("Reviews of Evidence Regarding Interventions to Reduce Alcohol-Impaired Driving," American Journal of Preventive Medicine 21 (4S) (2001): 66-88).

2. About 25,000 lives have been saved since the 1975 inception of MLDA laws. It is estimated that between 700-900 lives are saved each year due to these precautionary

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measures taken against teen drinking according to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA).

3. From 1983, when the minimum 21 drinking age was first introduced, to 1989, when all the U.S. state adopted the law, other countries around the world saw increases in underage binge drinking, while the U.S. experienced a 15 percent drop among high-school seniors according to MADD (Mothers Against Drunk Driving).

13 But, what if individually I don't have a problem with alcohol, shouldn't I be able to drink underage?

14 Think back to why laws are made in the first place; they are made for the common good—to protect yourself and others. Your upholding the law will help others who can't handle it.

"It is right not to eat meat or drink wine or do anything that makes your brother stumble" (Romans 14:21).

23

13 *Ask: But, what if individually you don't have a problem with alcohol? Shouldn't you be able to drink?*

14 *Tell the Racecar Driver Analogy.*

A racecar driver usually speeds on a racetrack at around 200 MPH. They learn how to safely go this speed while turning around a track. What if a racecar driver took his car on a regular highway and went 200 MPH?

Could he claim that the law didn't apply to him because he knew how to handle a car at this speed?

Surely not. He sets a poor example for other drivers by encouraging this behavior among others who cannot handle driving at 200 MPH. The law is made for the common good and does not depend upon the abilities of the individual.

Ask: Do you have any questions about the topic of underage drinking?

Guarding the Springs of Life

15 *Ask: Could someone read Ephesians 5:18?*

Ask: Paul emphasizes a contrast in this verse between being "filled with the Spirit" and being filled with wine. "How are these two states mutually exclusive?"

16 *Ask: How does sobriety affect your freedom to live as a Christian?*

Guarding the Springs of Life

We have seen how the Word of God praises the proper enjoyment of alcohol, and condemns its abuse. As daughters of God, made in His image and likeness (Genesis

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1:16-28), we walk in freedom and dignity through the exercise of our intellect and our will, those God-given powers by which we know and love. One of the most damaging consequences of drunkenness is that it deprives us of our ability *to know and to love*.

In Biblical usage, the word "heart" denotes the center of the human spirit, from which flow the "springs of life" (Proverbs 4:23)—our emotions, thoughts, and motivations; our moments of courage, decision, and action. It is *"the place of truth, where we choose life or death... it is the place of covenant"* (CCC 2563, emphasis added).

It is in light of these truths that the prophet Hosea listed drunkenness among the sins that "take away the understanding [literally, 'heart']" (Hosea 4:11).

The word "sobriety" comes from *bria*, meaning "measure". Hence, the man who is sober is the one who observes how the measure or limits in drinking and other enjoyments affect his reason. The Greek words translated as "sober", *nephaleos* and *sophron*, are related to vigilance and self-control (CCC 2563, emphasis added).

15 **Read Ephesians 5:18**

Why do you think Paul sets drunkenness against being filled with the Spirit of God?

16 How does sobriety affect your freedom to live as a Christian?

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Answer: Sobriety allows us to think clearly and make important choices. This is why 80%–90% of campus violence is linked to alcohol abuse and 90% of all rapes on college campuses involve alcohol. When people drink too much, whether they are male or female, their ability to reason is compromised. Sobriety allows us the freedom to use our reason.

17 *Review the Action Point: Discuss healthy alternatives to drinking. Encourage them to plan events and activities to invite their friends to, giving them a tangible example of how to have fun without being drunk. Maybe plan an event right now!*

Action Point

17 **Applying the Scriptures to Your Life**

- 1.) Think of ways that you can have fun without abusing alcohol.
- 2.) Pray for the virtue of self-control in this area—God will help us. We just have to be open to His grace and pray for it!
- 3.) Find friends who will encourage you to have self-control and not to get drunk.

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Chapter Five

THE LIFE OF EXCELLENCE

Letting God Define Our Understanding
of Excellence and Seeking It In Our
Families, Friendships, Studies, and Work

1 *Ask: Could I please have two volunteers to read the opening story about Edith Stein?*

1 For Starters

Edith Stein was born in Breslau, Germany (now, Wroclaw, Poland) on October 12 1891. The youngest of 11 children in her Jewish family, Edith was raised by her mother from the age of 2 after losing her father. Her mother, a very devout, hard-working, strong-willed, and truly wonderful woman, now had to fend for herself and to look after the family and their large business. Despite her efforts, she did not succeed in keeping up a living faith in her children and young Edith lost her faith in God.

Throughout her schooling, Edith was a tremendous student. In college she studied German and history although her favorite subjects were philosophy and woman's issues. She went on to study under some of the greatest philosophers of her day and earned a doctorate in philosophy. She was at first denied a professorship because of her gender, and then later denied on account of her Jewish ancestry; eventually, she would be a lecturer.

In the summer of 1921, she spent several weeks in the home of some fellow philosophers who had converted to Protestantism from Judaism. One evening Edith picked up an autobiography of St. Teresa of Avila and began reading. She read through the night and she later reflected: "When I had finished the book, I said to myself: 'This is the truth.'" A few months later she was baptized as a Catholic.

Immediately after her conversion she wanted to join a Carmelite convent, however, her spiritual mentors stopped her from doing so. Nonetheless, she took vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience at this time. She spent several years teaching and translating

philosophical works. She learned that it was possible to “pursue scholarship as a service to God,” successfully combining scholarship and faith in her work and her teaching, seeking to be a “tool of the Lord” in everything she taught. “If anyone comes to me, I want to lead them to Him.”

With the outbreak of World War II in 1933, the Nazi’s anti-Semitism was a great cause for concern for Jews, including Edith Stein. Her mentors now no longer stopped her from entering a Carmelite convent. She joined and took the name Sister Teresa Benedicta a Cruc – Teresa, Blessed of the Cross. Edith Stein was arrested by the Gestapo on August 2 1942, along with her sister Rosa, who had also converted and was serving at the same convent.

On August 7, 1938, early in the morning, 987 Jews were deported to Auschwitz. It was probably on August 9 that Sister Teresa Benedicta a Cruce, her sister, and many others died in a gas chamber. She was beatified by John Paul II in Cologne on May 1, 1987.

(Adapted from: http://www.vatican.va/news_services/liturgy/saints/ns_lit_doc_19981011_edith_stein_en.html)

For Starters Discussion Questions

Ask: What was the turning point in Edith Stein’s life and what changed in her life after this?

Answer: Her reading of the St. Theresa of Avila’s biography. Notice that once she found the truth, her whole life changed to conform to this truth.

Ask: How did she use her faith in all aspects of her life?

Answer: She used her teaching to bring people to Jesus Christ. She used her relationship with her sister to bring about her own radical conversion. She relied on her faith to die a martyr’s death in the gas chamber.

2 Read the next three paragraphs (leader).

2 We are called as Christians to imitate Christ; that's what it means to be one of His followers. Think about Jesus' life. He gave *everything* for us, even His own life (see Phil. 2:5-8)! During His time on earth, He gave Himself *totally*—in His preaching and teaching, in His healing, in the time that He spent with the disciples and others that He

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met, and in His prayer. He lived His call to reveal the Father to humanity *perfectly*. While we will not be *perfect* in what we do, we are to try to follow Jesus' example and to do well what God has given us to do.

That is what excellence is: a superiority of virtue and preeminence in accomplishment. We are actually capable of achieving excellence, with the help of God's grace!

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In the World, But Not of the World

3 Ask: *Could I have someone please read the quote by Matthew Kelly?*

3 “many people feel they need to leave the values and principles of their faith outside of certain activities in the same way they leave a coat in a waiting room. The modern world tries to separate faith from reason, the professional from the personal, the means from the ends. This separatist approach destroys the ‘unity of life’ and creates the modern madness of feeling torn in two.”

—Matthew Kelly, *Rediscovering Catholicism*

4 Ask: *Which way do you struggle with more—being caught up with earthly or spiritual things?*

Say: *Scripture calls us to let the light of Christ shine on all aspects of our lives that we may be the “salt of the earth and “light of the world.”*

4 Which way do you struggle with more—being too caught up with earthly or spiritual things?

28

5 *Ask: Could I have a three people read the Scripture passages?*

6 *Ask: What does Scripture say about a Christian's involvement in the world?*

Answer:
God wants us to be in the world, but also to sanctify the world. He wants us to “take every thought captive to obey Christ.”

And we should pursue holiness in such a way that we shoot for perfection.

7 *Ask: In what areas do Christians today fail to live out excellence? (In the workplace? In the production of Christian media and art? In politics?) Why is this the case?*

Ask: What areas do we fail to live out excellence?

Ask: We also don't want to simply focus on our weaknesses. In which these areas can you best be an inspiration and a role model to others?

8 *Ask: Could someone please read Colossians 3:23–24?*

5 **Read the following passages on how to live out our faith in this world: John 17:15-19, 2 Corinthians 10:3-5, and Matthew 5:48**

6 What does Scripture say about a Christian's involvement in the world?

7 Consider the various realms of your everyday life and where we fail to be excellent:

- Family life (e.g., how you treat your parents, siblings, etc.)
- School (e.g., your attitude towards classes, professors, grades, etc.)
- Work (e.g., your use of time at work, your relationship with co-workers, etc.)
- Social life (e.g., what you do on weekends, conversation topics, etc.)
- Recreation (e.g., your behavior in sports, responsibility in societies and clubs, etc.)
- Schedule (e.g., how you manage your time, the balance between activities, using your time wisely)

8 “If we define all that we are before our [God] and live our lives before one audience—the Audience of One—then we cannot define or decide our own achievement and our own success. It is not for us to say what we have accomplished. It is not for us to pronounce ourselves successful. It is not for us to spell out what our legacy has been. Indeed, it is not even for us to know. Only the Caller can say. Only the last Day will tell. Only the final ‘Well done’ will show what we have really done.”

—Os Guinness, *Prophetic Untimeliness: A Challenge to the Idol of Relevance*

Ask: How does this verse change everything that you do, from being a good friend/sister/daughter, to trying your best in school, to doing a good job at work?

Answer: We can live our lives in a way so we are not divided. Everything we do can be done for the Lord. (Feel free to read and discuss the Os Guinness quote)

Be All That You Can Be

9

Ask: Read Luke 10:38–42. What is the “one thing that is necessary?”

Be All That You Can Be

It's easy to become a “human do-ing” instead of “human be-ing”. In order to see how we can do our best in everything, we must first look at how we can be our best, how we can be who God has called us to be!

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First of all, before all else, we are called to be God's children. That means we are God's daughters above all. More important than workers, God wants children. Let's take a look at the parable of Mary and Martha to see how we can have our focus in the right place.

9

Read Luke 10:38–42

What is the “one thing that is necessary?”

What are some ways that you can sit at Jesus' feet? How can you grow in your relationship with Him?

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Answer: Sitting at His feet and listening to Him; communicating with Him; being open to Him. The best way we can do this today is through prayer.

Ask: What are those things that, like Martha, keep you from prayer?

Answer: Sometimes we don't think it's that important or we are too busy or we don't know how to pray.

If you're study has not read over the prayer method of ACTS, feel free to read this over as a group and then, ask: Why do you think daily prayer is important?

Answer: God is a God of the present, not the past. He is a person with whom we should have a relationship with, and time must be spent working on that relationship every day. We should have the perspective of awe that we are allowed to communicate with the Creator of everything in the universe, and that this God hears our prayer and answers them. A consistent daily prayer life will help us keep us develop and nurture this relationship with God, Whose guidance we need every day.

Many things could be said on prayer, but only a short method on how to pray will be given here. It is easy to remember with the acronym ACTS—**A**doration, **C**onfession, **T**hanksgiving, **S**upplication.

Adoration—Praise God for who He is. He is the creator of the entire universe and yet at the same time chooses to be present to us “In him we live and move and have our being” (Acts 17:28)

Confession—Make an examination of conscience. Recognize the areas in your life that have not been excellent. For serious or repeated sins, plan a time to go to Confession with a priest.

Thanksgiving—With a heart of gratitude, thank God for what He has provided and the things he has done in your life.

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Supplication—This is where you can make petitions to God. Ask for the strength to grow in a certain area, to handle a relationship correctly or to pray for someone you know.

This is just an example of a method of prayer. There are many methods available for prayer and in face some people do not use methods at all.

It is recommended to meditate for at least 20 minutes each day. Scripture or another spiritual work are helpful for meditation.

For more on prayer, ask your Bible study leader or FOCUS missionaries.

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10 *Review the action point.*

Action Point

10 **Applying the Scriptures to Your Life**

- 1.) Take some steps to develop a consistent daily prayer life. When a time and place to pray each day. Set goals and have someone to keep you accountable to these goals.
- 2.) Choose one thing to be excellent at this week. Make a specific goal and follow through.

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Chapter Six

COUNTING THE COST

Putting Leadership in Action

1 *Ask: Could I have two volunteers to start us off by reading the story?*

1 For Starters

In the early 1500s, two college students were rooming together at the University of Paris, located in the Latin Quarter. One of the students, Francis, was from a noble Spanish family, while his roommate, Peter, was a Frenchman and the son of peasant farmers. Both men excelled at their studies, despite the rigor of their schedules; at the university, students rose at four in the morning each day with class starting at five. Classes continued throughout the day until five in the afternoon, with short breaks for prayer, Mass, and siesta. Dinner was followed by more study and night prayers. The university was filled with men from different countries, but the only language allowed inside or outside of class was Latin.

Despite this strict schedule, the Latin Quarter was filled with all sorts of vices—brawling, drunkenness, and sexual immorality were quite commonplace, both among students and their teachers. Peter and Francis both stayed out of much of this trouble, but more out of fear than the pursuit of God. Francis hoped to take an ecclesial post and to use his nobility to live a posh lifestyle in luxury and comfort. Peter, on the other hand, could not quite decide what he wanted to do. At times he would want to get married and become a lawyer, a teacher, or a physician, at other times he wanted to become a simple priest or a monk. For three years Francis and Peter roomed together until one day their lives were completely changed with the arrival of a new roommate.

On that day, a thirty-six year old man by the name of Iñigo joined their room. Iñigo, more commonly known as Ignatius of Loyola, already had a storied life. He began his young career in pursuit of worldly fame and fortune through military conquest; however, a cannonball to the leg had left him bedridden for months. With little to do or read, he

read two books, one on the life of Christ, the other on the life of saints. When comparing the glory of worldly fame and fortune to the glory of serving God like saints such as St. Dominic and St. Francis of Assisi, Ignatius had a conversion experience and gave his life completely over to serving God. Early on, he had decided to start an order of men, or a company as he called it, to follow Jesus Christ. Despite his age, he hoped to obtain degrees at the University of Paris in order to help legitimize his preaching.

Peter, like many other students, was quickly moved by Ignatius and soon shared his desire to win souls for Jesus Christ. He became a disciple of Ignatius and wished to join his order. Francis, on the other hand, was quick to make fun of Ignatius and Peter. Clinging to his desire for an ecclesial position and a life of ease and comfort, he soon received a job as a professor.

Over the course of three years, Ignatius worked on Francis. Despite Francis' nobility, his lifestyle caused him to go into debt. Ignatius supplied him with money from the alms he had begged for from wealthy merchants. Ignatius also found for Francis students whom he could tutor to help provide a steady income for himself. Yet, Francis was still resistant to Ignatius. Francis sent letters home for papers to be sent to him to confirm his noble status so that he could continue his pursuit of comfort. During this time, Peter left university on vacation, leaving Francis and Ignatius together. When Peter came back, his roommate of six years had changed. He had finally given in to Ignatius' heeding, "What profits a man to gain the whole world if only to lose his soul." Francis wished to join Ignatius in winning souls to Jesus Christ and in time became St. Francis Xavier. St. Francis Xavier baptized hundreds of thousands of souls in Asia and was by most accounts, the greatest singular missionary force since St. Paul.

For Starters Discussion Questions

Ask: Before his conversion, what sort of man was Francis?

Answer: While avoiding some of the vices of his day, he wanted riches, fame, and comfortable lifestyle.

Ask: What did Ignatius do that led to Francis' conversion?

Answer: Ignatius did not say a magic phrase or convert Francis on the spot. It was through sharing his life with Francis over the course of several years that helped win him

over. Ignatius also continually sought out Francis and showed him generosity through giving him money to help cover his debts. Through time, Ignatius gained credibility with his friend, and his message finally stuck with Francis.

Vision for Leadership

2 *Ask: Could I have someone please read these next three paragraphs under “Vision for Leadership?”*

Ask: Why is college the “perfect storm” for evangelization?

In the first chapter, we looked at what true Christian leadership was. The last four chapters were dedicated to the three specific virtues of chastity, sobriety, and excellence. By mastering these three virtues on the college campus, we can develop the character to be a leader to our peers. In this chapter, we will give you a vision for leadership and some direction in how to lead on campus.

Vision for Leadership

2 The potential for development while a person is in college is astronomical. Dr. James Dobson, the founder of Focus on the Family, describes this time as the “critical decade.” Between ages sixteen and twenty-six, “most of the decisions that will shape the next fifty years will be made, including the choice of occupation, perhaps the decision to marry, and the establishing of values and principles by which life is governed.”

The students with whom you interact today on the college campuses of America will be the future leaders of our country and our world. Never again will you have the opportunity to live, work, study, and recreate around so many people in such a close proximity. Furthermore, never in your life will you have more time to invest in the lives of others. The combination of these four elements (the critical decade, future leaders, close proximity, and an enormous amount of free time) creates the perfect storm for evangelization.

On top of all this, our culture is at a critical juncture. A war is raging for the hearts and souls of men and women. God is calling for a generation of students to lead others to Jesus Christ and His Church. In his encyclical *Redemptoris Missio*, Pope John Paul II proclaimed, “the moment has come to commit all of the Church’s energies to a new evangelization and to the mission *ad gentes*. No believer in Christ, no institution of the Church can avoid this supreme duty: to proclaim Christ to all peoples” (RM, para. 3). Our Church is asking you to commit your energies to proclaim Christ to all people. Now is the time to take action. Now is the time for leadership.

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Leaving a Legacy

3 *Say: Let's look back to what Pier Giorgio's friends said about him at the end of his life.*

Ask: Could someone please read the quotations said about him?

4 *Ask: If you died at the end of your college career, what would you want people to say at your funeral? What would your legacy be?*

Leaving a Legacy

Bl. Pier-Giorgio Frassati was born in 1901 in Turin, Italy. As a college student, he loved mountain climbing, skiing, smoking his pipe, and playing practical jokes on his friends. At the same time, Frassati was known for his all night vigils in adoration, his devotion to the Blessed Eucharist, and his daily prayer life. He was a man of action who went into the homes of the poor and the sick, giving them food and at times paying for their children's

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education. He marched in political protests and stood up against the immoral secular festivals of his day. On one of his mountain expeditions he coined the phrase "Verso L'alto" (toward the top), which was applicable to prayer life, his evangelization, and his mountain climbing. He died of polio just before the completion of his engineering degree.

3 Here is what Pier Giorgio's friends said about him at the end of his life:

In his university's Christian society (Cesare Balbo Circle) he was known as: "(the) member who, without looking for the honour, possesses innumerable friends and enjoys a pleasant authority over them, who knows each and is beloved by each, puts himself out to please them, accepts every duty and carries it out to the general satisfaction."

From a rector of the mountain chapel that Frassati frequented: "I singled out Pier-Giorgio immediately from the others for the ascendancy which he exercised over his comrades and for the optimism which he exuded... his Catholicism, neither casual nor narrow, was vital, active and rich in dynamic apostolicity."

One of his friends, struck by his ability to attract others said this: "His secret for gaining hearts and souls was his unalloyed charity."

4 Take some time to think about your own life. Just like Pier Giorgio Frassati, what if you died at the end of your college career? What would you want people to say at your funeral? What would your legacy be?

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Start Here

- 5** *Ask: What is one thing from this study that has helped you transform a part of your life or has inspired you to transform an aspect of your life?*

Thinking about our legacy helps us live with an end in mind. And, having this end in mind, we can shape our lives around this end goal. When we think of what job we will take, who we will marry, where we will live, we should act with this end in mind and ask what will allow me to make the most impact for Jesus Christ in what we are doing.

Now, let's look at how we can practically make an impact for Jesus Christ while students on campus.

Start Here

Many who are excited about spreading the faith quickly look to what they can get involved in or what program they can develop. While these are important, our starting place should be ourselves. The three virtues we saw in the previous chapters will help form a foundation for our witness, but we must always continue to transform ourselves.

In the first few years of his pontificate, John Paul II took the first ever papal trip to Ireland. Ireland is a predominantly Catholic country with a rich Catholic heritage. Out of the three million residents of Ireland at the time, one million of them showed up at Phoenix Park in Dublin to hear the Pope speak. His most famous line from that speech was, "Be converted every day." While Ireland had a lot of Catholic culture and Catholic things, he wanted to remind them that our faith calls us to constantly conform our lives to Jesus Christ through daily transformation.

- 5** Our pursuit of personal holiness is the most important things we can do. It is the foundation for sharing Jesus Christ with others as we share what He has done for us in our own lives.

"If you are what you should be, you will set the world on fire!"

—St. Catherine of Siena

As leaders, our lives must echo the words of St. Paul, "Follow my example, as I follow the example of Jesus Christ" (1 Corinthians 11:1).

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Heroic Generosity

6 *Ask: Could someone please read Acts 19:8-10?*

Ask yourself:

- If I am asking others to follow Jesus, am I following Jesus each day?
- If I am asking others to follow me, am I following the leadership that Jesus has placed in my life?
- If I am asking others to become servant leaders in the image of Jesus Christ, am I a servant leader?

Heroic Generosity

6 **Read Acts 19:8-10**

7 What is Paul's method of evangelization? Is it effective?

Paul describes his method further in his second letter to Timothy.

8 **Read 2 Timothy 2:1-2**

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7 *Ask: What is Paul's method of evangelization?*

Answer: Instead of preaching to the masses, Paul took his disciples to the school of Tyrannus and teaches them there in small groups.

Ask: Is Paul's method effective?

Answer: The method is very effective. In the span of two years, Paul is able to reach many who lived in Asia Minor, what is now Turkey, at the time.

8 *Ask: Could someone please read 2 Timothy 2:1-2?*

9 *Ask: What does Paul exhort Timothy to do in his evangelization efforts?*

9 What does Paul exhort that Timothy do in his evangelization efforts?

Paul did preach to the masses. But, he often reached souls through investing his life into small groups of people. As he writes in his first letter to the Thessalonians, he and his fellow workers gave the believers there, “not only the gospel of God but also our own selves” (2 Thessalonians 2:8). In this way, believers multiplied. Paul essentially *replaces* himself through this method. When he is gone, others are able to do the work that he did. This is exactly what Jesus did as well! While Jesus certainly preached to the masses, He spent much of his life pouring Himself into twelve men. In particular, He picked out three men who were the closest to Him — Peter, James and John. After His death and resurrection, He gave His Apostles the authority to continue spread the good news and building up His kingdom here on earth.

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Answer: Paul instructs Timothy to take what he had heard from Paul and entrust it to other faithful men who can in turn teach it to others. In other words, what Paul did to Timothy, Timothy is to do this for others who will do this for others and so on.

Ask: In the opening story, how did Ignatius embody the example given by Jesus and St. Paul?

Answer: Ignatius chooses to invest in the lives of Peter and Francis for three years while they are his roommates. He continues to work with Francis because he knows that Francis is a man who if converted could win over many souls.

Boldness

10 *Read this paragraph (leader).*

Boldness

10 Recall the example from chapter one about the swordsman. No matter what kind of sword he has, he is nothing if he doesn't have the skill to use it or the courage to fight. By pursuing virtue, we begin to develop the skills needed for our own personal witness to others. Now, we need the courage to share Jesus Christ with others. God wants a generation of Catholics to be daring enough to do whatever He asks of them. He wants us to be proactive in sharing the Gospel with others.

11 **Read Acts 4:13-21**

What were Peter and John up against? Why did they continue to preach despite the obstacles?

Evangelization is not just for those who are no longer afraid of reaching out to others. It is for those who may still be afraid, but decide to reach out anyways.

“The world promises you comfort, but you were not made for comfort. You were made for greatness.”

—Pope Benedict XVI

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11 *Ask: Could I have someone please read Acts 4:13-21?*

Ask: What were Peter and John up against? Why did they continue to preach despite the obstacles?

Answer: The Jewish leaders wanted to beat them or even kill them. They couldn't stop preaching because of what they had seen and heard.

Counting the Cost

12 *Ask: Could I have someone please read Luke 14:25-35?*

12 **Read Luke 14:25-35**

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13 *Ask: According to verses 26-27, what are the requirements for becoming a disciple of Jesus Christ?*

13 According to verses 26-27, what are the requirements for becoming a disciple of Jesus Christ?

“For what will it profit a man, if he gains the whole world and forfeits his life?” (Matthew 16:26).

14 *Ask: In light of the topics we’ve discussed in the past few weeks, what would following Jesus Christ cost you?*

14 In light of the topics we’ve discussed in the past few weeks, what would following Jesus Christ cost you?

Answer: To be a disciple, we must put Jesus above all else—our family, our possessions, even our

15 Are you willing to pay the price?

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own life, and take up our cross and follow after Jesus.

14 *Ask: For Xavier, he put following Jesus above all else as he traveled to India, Japan, and China to share the Gospel. This lifestyle cost him nobility, wealth, and a life of comfort. He suffered hardships along the way and eventually died off the coast of China. In light of the topics we’ve discussed in the past few weeks, what would following Jesus Christ cost you? (Ask for volunteers to share their answer).*

Note to Leader: Feel free to have you participants reflect on Pope Benedict’s quote: “The world promises you comfort, but you were not made for comfort. You were made for greatness.”

15 *Ask: Are you willing to pay the price?*

Leader Note: Here is a quote you can use to help discussion: “There are some who wish to be humble, but without being despised, who wish to be happy with their lot, but without being needy, who wish to be chaste, without mortifying the body, to be patient without suffering. They want both to acquire virtues and to avoid the sacrifices those virtues involve: they are like soldiers who flee the battlefield and try to win the war from the comfort of the city.” —St. Gregory the Great

16 *Say: Let's close with the prayer by St. Ignatius of Loyola in your Student Guide.*

16 Teach us, good Lord,
to serve you as you deserve,
to give and not to count the cost,
to fight and not to heed the wounds,
to toil and not to seek for rest,
to labor and not to ask for any reward,
save that of knowing that we do your will.
Amen.

—St. Ignatius of Loyola

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