



ONE

Corresponds to Page 11 in Participant's Book

Called to Be Disciples:

Living, Professing and Bearing Witness of Our Faith

The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (“UCCB”) officially defines ‘disciples’ as those who “make a conscious, firm decision, carried out in action, to be followers of Jesus Christ no matter the cost to themselves.” (*Stewardship: A Disciples’ Response-Tenth Anniversary Edition November, 2002*)

The Catechism of the Catholic Church (“CCC”) further states “[that] Jesus associated His disciples with His own life, revealed the mystery of the Kingdom and gave them a share in His mission, His joy, and His sufferings. (CCC – 2nd Edition 767,787)

GATHER

Begin by welcoming members to the group and encouraging open dialogue. Remember to set ground rules for the group and be ready to re-direct tangential discussion when dialogue strays off topic. It is also a good idea to time discussions to ensure your group time is used efficiently. Many successful groups do not allow participants to re-fill drinks or snacks during group discussion. Be sure your group space is free and clear from any distractions like background noise.

OPENING PRAYER

Many groups pray the ‘Opening Prayer’ together. This is a great way to foster unity within the group and build group cohesion. In

other situations, especially when the host couple rotates, the host may lead the “Opening Prayer”.

Jesus, our Teacher:

You inspired your Apostles and the first generation of your church with your words, your acts of mercy, and your love for the poor.

The Apostles continued your teaching and your good works, accompanied by the Holy Spirit.

May we, in this generation, live your Gospel of love and mercy by doing what you taught us to do and by teaching what you taught us to teach.

May we be remembered as your disciples. Amen.

REPORT ON ACTIONS

Take time to report on how you engaged in action recently. It is encouraging to hear what others are doing and prompts us to put our faith into practice more intentionally.

Remember to keep group discussion focused and be cognizant of time.

SCRIPTURE REFLECTION

A reading from the holy gospel according to John (14: 6-12).

“Jesus said to Thomas, ‘I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me. If you know me, then you will also know my Father. From now on you do know him and have seen him.’ Phillip said to him, ‘Master, show us the Father, and that will be enough for us.’ Jesus said to him, ‘Have I been with you for so long a time and you still do not know me, Phillip? Whoever has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, “Show us the Father”? Do you not believe that I am in the Father and the Father is in me?’ Amen, Amen, I say to you, whoever believes in me will do the works that I do, and will do greater ones than these, because I am going to the Father.”

1. What was Philip, the Apostle, looking for when he said, “Master, show us the Father”?

The scripture also continues "...and that will be enough for us." Phillip (and likely the other apostles) did not realize that he was in the presence of God. Perhaps Phillip was hoping to experience some dazzling phenomenon complete with awe and fear as described in the Old Testament.

2. What did Jesus mean by stating, "Whoever has seen me has seen the Father"?

Jesus explicitly states "The words that I speak to you I do not speak on my own. The Father who dwells in Me is doing His works. Believe me that I am in the Father and the Father is in Me..." (John 14:10-11). Jesus is impressing upon the apostles the sacred truth that He is the manifestation of God the Father here on Earth. Also, it is by his works that one can come to know the Father.

SOCIAL INQUIRY

By definition, a disciple is a follower, one who accepts and assists in spreading the doctrines of another. A Christian disciple is a person who accepts and assists in the spreading of the good news of Jesus Christ

Jesus tells us how discipleship must look in our lives. In the Sermon on the Mount, (Matthew 5: 1-10), Jesus gives us the Beatitudes, which call us to exhibit virtues of humility, mercy, purity of heart, peacemaking, suffering persecution for justice sake, and joy.

When we look at Jesus for a model in the Gospels, we see that his ministry begins with baptism, proceeds despite temptation and opposition, and culminates in suffering and death, with vindication an unseen hope requiring faith. He is the vine, we are the branches.

We need to stay connected to Christ in order to be true disciples. Our mission for Christ requires a new attitude toward material

things and calls for a new lifestyle that puts allegiance to Jesus first.

The Catechism of the Catholic Church: “The disciple of Christ must not only keep the faith and live it, but also profess it, confidently bear witness to it, and spread it: ‘All however must be prepared to confess Christ before men and to follow him along the way of the Cross, amidst the persecutions which the Church never lacks.’ Service of and witness to the faith are necessary for salvation: ‘So everyone who acknowledges me before men, I also will acknowledge before my Father who is in heaven; but whoever denies me before men, I also will deny before my Father who is in heaven.’” (CCC, 1816)

From your personal experience, **OBSERVE:**

Members should "Get the facts." At this stage of the meeting, members should refrain from expressing their opinions about facts. They should try to simply report, like any good objective newspaper reporter. The knowledge and experience of group members are valuable, but the group must go beyond its own members to gather facts from the larger world and report them objectively. One can editorialize later. (From the CFM Website)

1. Which discipleship actions (or “Acts”) of your parish or CFM group in the past year inspired others to action or discipleship? Why did they work (or why not)?
 - It may be helpful to ask group members to provide concrete examples of how these actions “worked” to inspire others.
 - Perhaps a group member will share their experience performing a service-based action. Encourage them to identify whether or not the action inspired others to join in or initiate a similar act on their own.
 - Encourage members to avoid ‘judging’ the action by any other means and apply the success of the action on whether or not others were motivated to participate or initiate similar subsequent actions.

2. Name some contemporary figures whose actions reflect Jesus’s model of compassion and practice. What is their “style” of discipleship?

There are obviously numerous examples of Christian disciples. Use this question to help identify those figures who exemplify Jesus’ model of compassion and practice.

It may be helpful to consider how Jesus demonstrated compassion for others by referencing the following scriptural passages:

Matthew 8:3: Jesus stretched out His hand [to a leper], touched him and said, “I will do it. Be made clean.” His leprosy was cleansed immediately.

Mark 6:34: When [Jesus] disembarked and saw the vast crowd, his heart was moved with pity for them, for they were like sheep without a shepherd; and he began to teach them many things.

Luke 19:41-42: As [Jesus] drew near, he saw the city and wept over it, saying, “If this day you only knew what makes for peace-but now it is hidden from your eyes.

“Styles” of discipleship or practice may include or considered to be:

- Either personal or public
- May be comprised of daily prayer/worship, almsgiving, fasting, witnessing to others, ministering to others; bringing up others in faith.

3. What are the ways each of the sacraments strengthens us as disciples?

The Catechism of the Catholic Church defines a sacrament as an efficacious (abstract) sign of grace, instituted by Christ and entrusted by the Church, by which divine life is dispensed to us through the work of the Holy Spirit.

Baptism: Is the sacrament of initiation into the Church and the baptized person is forgiven of original sin and all sins committed up to the date of baptism. CCC par. 1213- 1284.

Penance and Reconciliation: The liturgical celebration of God’s forgiveness of our sins. CCC par 1422-1498.

Eucharist/Holy Communion: The reception of the Body and Blood of Christ—our fellowship and union with Jesus and other baptized Christians in the Church. CCC par.1322-1419

Confirmation: Completes the grace of Baptism by a special outpouring of the gifts of the Holy Spirit, which seal or “confirm” the baptized in union with Christ and equip them for active participation in the worship and apostolic life of the Church. CCC 1285-1321

Matrimony: A covenant or partnership of life between a man and a woman ordered to the well-being of the spouses and the procreation and upbringing of children. CCC par. 1601-1666

Holy Orders: The sacrament y by which the mission entrusted by Christ to His Apostles continues to be exercised in the Church. This sacrament has three (3) districting degrees or “orders”: deacon, priest, and bishop. CCC1536-1600

Anointing of the Sick: This sacrament includes a special grace of healing and comfort to the Christian who is suffering the infirmities of serious illness or old age together with the forgiving of the person’s sins. CCC par. 1499-1535

Note if you do not have a Catechism it is available online from the US Catholic Conference of Bishops at <http://ccc.usccb.org/flipbooks/catechism/files/assets/basic-html/page-I.html>

In the light of Christ’s teaching, **JUDGE**:

For CFMers, to judge is not to find another person sinful or holy; it is rather the comparison of how things are with how things should be, in accord with Gospel values. To make such a comparison requires objective observation of how things are, as well as a sincere effort to determine the teaching of Jesus. (from the CFM website)

1. What is the understanding of discipleship in your parish and local community?

The “understanding” that is called into question can also relate to how members perceive or interpret their own understanding of Christian discipleship.

For example, perhaps someone’s ‘understanding’ of discipleship is merely taking their family to church on ‘special’ holidays. Maybe others have more of a ‘service-based’ perspective.

2. Why is God calling you to practice and promote discipleship? What is your personal discipleship mission? Is it the same for everyone? How, why, or why not?

Scripture Reference: [Matthew 28:18-20](#): The Jesus approached and said to them, “All power in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, until the end of the age.”

Encourage group members to personalize Jesus’ command in the above referenced scripture passage.

Many continue to discern God’s calling throughout their lives. Some may notice that the call changes over time. Finding out what your ‘personal discipleship mission’ is can be a very effective way to put your discipleship call into regular practice.

It is through our acts of service to others that enable us to demonstrate God's love. We personify God's love to others when we answer God's call.

3. Are there members in your local community that you would consider disciples? What are the signs of their discipleship? Consider how these individuals put their calling into practice. Do these individuals strive to change culture and are they examples of God's love?

The "signs" of their discipleship can be further explained by their demonstrations of love and compassion to others.

Based on what has been discussed, **ACT:**

Ideally ACTs (actions) are inspired and identified through your group's discussion. The list below contains some additional ideas that may be appropriate. Consider a recurring 'action' that can be an ongoing experience for your group that lasts throughout the season/year.

1. Organize a social evening for friends in your local community or parish featuring a video or reading from the life of a modern day "disciple". Talk about it over refreshments- does that "disciple" inspire you or others into ACTION?
2. Design a poster or an article for the parish bulletin that would help people recognize their good deeds as works of a disciple of Jesus.
3. Prepare a sticky note that reads, "Look, a Disciple." Place it on your home mirror for two weeks.
4. Specifically contact someone you see as a disciple in your community and tell them; that their actions inspire you to be a better disciple.

TAKE CFM HOME

How can you apply/incorporate the group's discussion to your family? Remember, we are called to make disciples and be a domestic church for our children.

1. Encourage family members to be observant about how God is working in their day and around them.
2. Every Sunday share with one another one thing you saw God do that week.

LOOK AHEAD TO THE NEXT MEETING

Take a look at the Observes for the next meeting to see what needs to be done in preparation

1. Phone or email host if you cannot attend.
2. Look ahead at the Observe questions for the next meeting.
3. Who could you invite to join our group?

If children have come to the meeting with their parents, gather them to join you in the closing prayer.

CLOSING PRAYER

We thank you, Lord, for bringing us together as a group of aspiring disciples of Jesus Christ, and for having this CFM group as our classroom and classmates. You have helped us to realize that we are one with you and with each other. Give us the grace of hearing your voice and allowing your inspiration to move us to act, knowing that we are your disciples in this time and in this place.

And let us pray the Prayer for the Christian Family Movement (p. 80 or inside back cover of the Participants' book).

WORKS CITED

Catechism of the Catholic Church. Rome, 1995, no. 1816.
<http://ccc.usccb.org/flipbooks/catechism/files/assets/basic-html/page-I.html>