



SESSION TWELVE

HOLINESS

is possible

We thank you for this day and for all your blessings. Help us to remain always grateful for all you do for us and in us. Watch over in a special way today anyone who is hungry, lonely, depressed, addicted, unemployed, or just in need of the human touch, and inspire us to realize that we are your partners in the work you wish to do in the world. Help us to remain ever mindful of the great love you have for each and every one of us, and give us the courage to respond with the bold enthusiasm of a little child. We ask all this in Jesus' name. Amen.

—————Matthew Kelly—————

12. HOLINESS IS POSSIBLE

We are almost at the end of our time together, and now it's time for us to put all the pieces together.

When we play football, we know the goal is to score as many points as possible. In business the goal is to produce high-quality goods and services and produce a profit. The goal of golf is to finish with the lowest score. We approach almost everything we do with a goal or a desired outcome in mind.

So, what is the goal of the Christian life? It's amazing how many people have no idea. Henry David Thoreau wrote, "In the long run, men hit only what they aim at. Therefore, they had better aim at something high." What are we aiming at? What is the goal we are moving toward?

Holiness is the goal of the Christian life. I know. Huge concept. Serious stuff. But I want you to keep three things in mind:

First, what you think holiness is and what it actually is might very well be two quite different things. Second, you want holiness. You may not realize it yet, but you do. Finally, it may be a big concept and serious stuff, but a little bit of seriousness is highly agreeable to the soul. As I have said to you time and time again throughout this series, you are not too young to start thinking about life's big questions. You are not too young for a little bit of seriousness. In fact, the sooner you embrace some seriousness, the more fruitful and fulfilling your life will be.

12.1 THE MOMENT

So, what is holiness? Our culture makes holiness seem boring. Nothing could be further from the truth. The culture pretends that anything religious encroaches on our freedom, when in fact authentic spirituality sets us free. Some people think that if you are to be holy you can never have any fun. Another lie. Nobody lived more fully than the saints. The truth is, there is nothing more attractive than holiness. And perhaps the biggest surprise of all is that you want to live a holy life more than you want anything else.

You have an enormous yearning for happiness. Almost every decision you make is based on this yearning. The reality is the more you grow in holiness, the happier you will be. Happiness and holiness are linked. God wants you to be happy and he wants you to live a holy life; the two cannot be separated.

You also have an enormous desire for relationships. But what kind of relationships do you want? Do you want relationships that are filled with lying, cheating, and gossip, in which you always have to have your guard up? That stuff is exhausting, because we can never relax in relationships like those.

Life has taught me that in great relationships we can relax because we know our friends want what is good for us. They are helping us to become the-best-version-of-ourselves, and no matter what happens, we know that they have our best interests at heart.

Do you want to be in relationships with people who are patient or impatient? Humble or prideful? Generous or stingy? Thoughtful or careless? Faithful or unfaithful? Whether you are aware of it or not, you want holiness—and you want to be around other people who are striving to live holy lives.

The problem is, most Christians have never considered holiness as a possibility. Most Christians don't actually believe that holiness is possible. That's the lie. It's the most devastating lie in the history of Christianity. The tragic thing is, this is not a lie that gets told about Christians, it's a lie we tell ourselves. It is subtle, deceptive, and disorienting.

We might believe that holiness is possible for someone else, like Mother Teresa or our grandma, but not for us. We know our faults and failings and weaknesses, we know the horrible thoughts we have at times, and we know what we are capable of because we know the dark things we have done.

But I am here to let you in on a life-changing secret: Holiness is possible. It's possible for you to live a holy life. This changes everything. This opens up incredible possibilities.

It's easy to say, but let me prove it to you.

If I said to you, "I want you to create one holy moment today," you would probably ask me, "What is a holy moment?"

A holy moment happens when you are being the person God created you to be and doing what he wants you to do in that moment. Examples of holy moments include being patient with your little brother or sister, helping someone in need, being a good friend, welcoming someone who has been rejected by others, and avoiding gossip.

Anyone can create a single holy moment. If you really set your mind to it, you could create a holy moment today. And if you can create one holy moment today, you can create two tomorrow, and four the next day. Once you know how to create a single holy moment, you can duplicate the process.

Holiness IS POSSIBLE

1 Thessalonians 4:3

"For this is the will of God, your sanctification: that you abstain from immorality..."

KNOW IT: God wants you to live a holy life.

THINK ABOUT IT: How many holy moments can you create today?

LIVE IT: Make it a point to create one holy moment each hour.



"WHAT REALLY MATTERS IN LIFE IS THAT WE ARE LOVED BY CHRIST AND THAT WE LOVE HIM IN RETURN. IN COMPARISON TO THE LOVE OF JESUS, EVERYTHING ELSE IS SECONDARY. AND, WITHOUT THE LOVE OF JESUS, EVERYTHING IS USELESS."

POPE JOHN PAUL II



The saints were not born saints, and they weren't perfect. They were men and women like you and me who realized that the world's vision for them was bankrupt, so they turned to God and his vision for their lives. They created one holy moment at a time, and over the course of their lives they strung together thousands of holy moments to create a holy life. You can do that too.

Holiness is possible, and once we come to that realization everything changes and possibilities we never considered before open up before us.



DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. WHO IS THE HOLIEST PERSON YOU KNOW? WHAT MAKES THAT PERSON HOLY?

2. WHO IS YOUR FAVORITE SAINT? WHY?

3. WHAT'S ONE THING YOU HAVE LEARNED THROUGHOUT THE DECISION POINT EXPERIENCE THAT SURPRISED YOU?

“IT IS JESUS THAT YOU SEEK

when you dream of happiness; He is waiting for you

when nothing else you find satisfies you;

HE IS THE *beauty* **TO WHICH** *you are so attracted*;

it is He who provoked you with that *thirst for fullness*

that will not let you **SETTLE FOR COMPROMISE**;

it is He who urges you to shed the masks of a false life;

IT IS HE WHO READS *in your heart* **YOUR MOST GENUINE CHOICES,**

THE CHOICES THAT OTHERS TRY TO STIFLE.

IT IS JESUS WHO STIRS IN YOU THE DESIRE

TO DO SOMETHING GREAT WITH YOUR LIVES,

the will to follow an ideal, the refusal to allow yourselves

TO BE GROUND DOWN BY MEDIOCRITY,

the courage to *commit yourselves humbly*

AND PATIENTLY TO IMPROVING YOURSELVES AND SOCIETY,

making the world *more human* and more fraternal.”

[POPE JOHN PAUL II]



12.2 Everything IS AN Opportunity

Sometimes people fall into the trap of thinking that holiness is about doing something extraordinary. But most of the time holiness is just about doing the ordinary things of everyday life really well.

People used to ask Mother Teresa for advice, asking her what they should do with their lives, and she would tell them, "Do something beautiful for God!"

When she became a nun Mother Teresa chose her name because she had been influenced and inspired by Saint Therese of Lisieux, a nineteenth-century Carmelite nun. Saint Therese was famous for what she called "the little way."

The Little Way suggests that we can grow in holiness just by doing the ordinary things of everyday life well. For example, Therese wrote that simply picking something up off the ground when it is inconvenient or when you would rather not and offering that small action to God could help you grow in holiness. In the same way, giving your full attention to the person you are with (rather than texting someone else) is a way you can grow in holiness, as is doing your chores without being asked, or doing your brother's or sister's chores because you know they are having a tough day. The little way is everywhere.

Holiness doesn't necessarily mean doing extraordinary things. God invites us to do the little things of everyday life with great love. When is the last time you did something with great love? And even when holiness does involve something extraordinary, that extraordinary thing usually comes as a culmination of a thousand small things done with great love.

Once we discover the little way, we begin to recognize that opportunities to grow in holiness are everywhere. Everything that happens every day is an opportunity for holiness. The way we interact with people, the way we work or study, and how we use our free time are all opportunities to grow in holiness.

Have you ever known someone who was holy? Who is the holiest person you have ever met? The man who encouraged me to pray for ten minutes a day was a holy man. When I first met him I was about fifteen years old, and I have never forgotten what he taught me about life. He gave me dozens of insights, but what he taught me about work and study I have used every day.

"When you study," he said to me, "put the initials of someone at the top of each page of notes, or at the top of each page you read in a book. Then, in a very short prayer, offer the work on that page to God

as a prayer for that person. Perhaps your dad is having a hard time at work or your grandmother is sick, or maybe you have a friend or a sibling who needs your prayers. Place their initials at the top of a page, and offer that work to God as a prayer for that person. In this way, we can transform every hour of study into an hour of prayer."

At the time I had a job after school working at a pharmacy, riding around delivering packages to the elderly. He taught me the same thing about my work. Back then I had a watch that would chime on the hour. He said to me, "Each time your watch chimes, offer the next hour of your work to God for a particular person or intention. In this way we transform every hour of work into prayer."

Saint Paul wrote, "Pray without ceasing." But we cannot all just go to church all day long and pray, so what did Paul mean? He was encouraging us to transform everything we do into prayer.

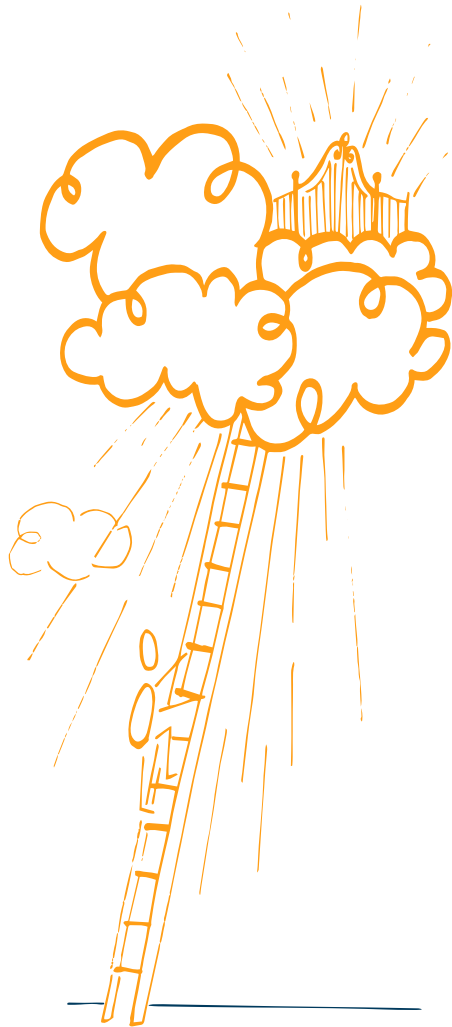
Everything is an opportunity to grow in holiness. One thing that is beautifully unique about Christianity is our belief that suffering has value. Life is difficult. Life is wonderful and beautiful, but it is also difficult. And suffering is an inevitable part of life. The question is, how are you going to respond to suffering?

Even suffering is an opportunity to grow in holiness. Jesus said, "If anyone wishes to come after me, he must deny himself, and take up his cross and follow me." (Matthew 16:24) I visited with a good friend of mine last week, an old priest who has been in horrific pain for months with back problems. When I visited he told me he had been sitting in the chair he was in for twenty-three hours a day for more than a week while he was waiting to have an operation. He smiled a huge smile and said, "But I'm not wasting any of my suffering. I am offering it up to God as a prayer for all the young people who will experience the Confirmation program." How cool is that? He is offering his suffering as a prayer for you!

We all have our crosses to carry. What cross are you carrying right now? Are you trying to carry it alone or are you letting Jesus help you? He wants to help. And as you carry your cross are you offering your suffering up to God as a prayer?

Each Sunday at Mass as the offertory gifts are being brought up I place any sufferings or challenges I have in my life on the altar. I give them to God. I offer them up. I also place my marriage on the altar, and my children, and my health, my money and work, my things. I place everything on the altar, my whole life and my whole self. I offer it all to God.

Everything is an opportunity to grow in holiness. I hope this session will help you to recognize the opportunities each day. The Church needs a whole new generation of people committed to living holy lives.



EVERYTHING IS AN OPPORTUNITY TO GROW IN HOLINESS



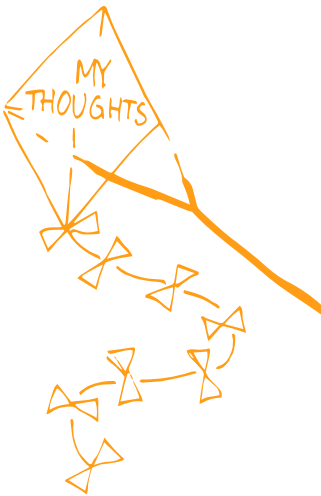
PRAY WITHOUT CEASING

discussion questions

1. WHO DO YOU KNOW WHO DOES LITTLE THINGS WITH GREAT LOVE?

2. WHAT LITTLE THINGS CAN YOU DO WITH GREAT LOVE TODAY?

3. WHAT DOES TODAY’S CULTURE THINK ABOUT DOING LITTLE THINGS WITH GREAT LOVE?



12.3 your **YES** can change the **WORLD**

Throughout your life there are going to be times when you feel like there must be more to life or that something is missing. We all have the same kind of empty feeling from time to time. You see, we all have a hole in us that needs to be filled.

We try to fill that hole in lots of different ways. When I was a child I thought the hole would be filled if Santa brought me just what I wanted or if I won enough soccer games and golf matches. As I grew older I tried to fill that hole with other things.

We try to fill the hole with pleasure, but that doesn't work. We tell ourselves, "Maybe I can fill it with stuff!" So we get a car, a house, clothes, a watch, handbags, jewelry, shoes—everything the material world has to offer. But that doesn't fill the hole either, and the empty feeling remains. So we go off to see the world and find ourselves, but that doesn't fill the hole. Next we chase accomplishment. "If I can just achieve enough, perhaps that will fill the hole." We achieve great things, but the emptiness continues to reign. The hole is still there.

We are slow learners, so we usually cycle through several rounds of each of these attempts at filling the hole. More pleasure, more travel, more stuff, more accomplishments, the right friends, sex, drugs, fame, status . . . but time and time again the emptiness continues. In fact, the more you try to fill the hole with these things, the bigger the hole seems to be.

We all experience the same kind of emptiness. Why? The reason is profoundly simple. We each have a God-sized hole in us. Only God can fill the hole. Try anything else you want, but it won't work. It never has and it never will.

My favorite line in the Catechism is the opening line in Chapter One, which reads: "The desire for God is written in the human heart, because man is created by God and for God; and God never ceases to draw man to himself. Only in God will he find the truth and the happiness he never stops searching for."

You have a God-sized hole in you. What are you trying to fill it with? Are you ready to let God take away that emptiness once and for all? Life is choices. You get to decide.

It's amazing how a simple yes or no can change your life.

One of the most practical things about growing spiritually is that we get really good at saying no. Most people are bad at saying no. Every day we find ourselves saying yes to things that we know we should be

saying no to. We do this because of peer pressure, fear of missing out on something, a false feeling of obligation, or just to stay busy so we can distract ourselves from really thinking about life and what God is calling us to. But here's the thing: When we say yes to stuff we know is not for us, we miss out on the stuff that is uniquely ours.

Let me give you an example. I was talking to a friend of mine the other day and I asked him how his girlfriend, Julie, was. He said she was great, so I asked him if he thought she was the one for him. He said no. So I asked him when they were going to break up. He said they weren't going to break up. I asked why and he said that he really liked her and they had fun together.

"What are you doing Friday night?" I asked.

"Taking Julie to that new movie."

On Friday night, when he was out at the movies with Julie, that might have been the night when he was going to meet the woman that God had created just for him. When we say yes to stuff that is not for us, we miss out on the stuff that God created just for us.

Get really good at saying no to anything that you know is not for you. And the only way to say no to anything, is to have a deeper yes. As we grow spiritually – through prayer, the Scriptures, and the Sacraments - we get really clear about: who we are, what we are here for, what matters most, and what matters least. This personal clarity allows us to be really good at say yes to the right things and no to the stuff that just isn't part of God's plan for us.

If you have been practicing The Prayer Process each day I'm sure you are already getting a clearer sense of who you are, what you're here for, what matters most, and what matters least. And that personal clarity is a beautiful thing.

From the beginning it has been my hope that this program will help you become a great decision maker, because decision making is so central to our experience of life. Learning to say yes to the right things and no to the wrong things is essential.

Now it's time to face the decision at hand. At baptism your parents and godparents made a choice for you. Now you have to decide for yourself—and make no mistake, it is one of the biggest decisions of your life. God has chosen you. The question is: How will you respond?

We have been making this journey toward Confirmation, and now we are almost there. It's time to commit. Say yes to Confirmation, but much more than that, decide today to say yes to Jesus and his Church. Choose them, for they have chosen you. Open your workbooks and sign

WHAT ARE YOU *trying to* FILL YOUR EMPTINESS *—with?—*

1 Thessalonians 5:17
"pray constantly"

KNOW IT: We are called
to transform every
moment into a prayer.

THINK ABOUT IT: How can
you transform your dai-
ly activity into prayer?
For whom can you offer
these prayers to God?

LIVE IT: Offer each hour
of work or study to God
as a prayer for a specific
intention.

**"WHAT YOU
ARE IS GOD'S
GIFT TO YOU.
WHAT YOU
BECOME IS
YOUR GIFT
TO GOD."**

HANS URS VON BALTHASAR

**100%
AVAILABLE**





WHO WAS DAVID?

David was an ancestor of Jesus (c. 1040 BC–970 BC) and perhaps the most brilliant leader of ancient Israel. He had the mind and charisma to inspire a great nation. In other ways he was a very ordinary man who struggled with destructive passion and was motivated at times by political gain. Yet through it all he had a deep love of God. The Bible describes David as a man after God’s own heart (Acts 13:22).

When David was just a boy he was summoned to play music for King Saul in order to cure his melancholy. David also gained fame in his youth when he killed the Philistine Goliath with his slingshot. After Saul died, David rose to power and became King of Israel, uniting the twelve tribes.

the pledge. Read it slowly, pray about it, and sign it. Say yes to God and his Church, and say yes enthusiastically. Not just a whimpering, passive yes, but a wholehearted and enthusiastic YES.

Your Catholic faith will always be a part of you. You get to decide if it is going to be something powerful and positive, or something negative and misunderstood.

God has a plan. When we don’t play our part, the whole thing falls apart. It’s all connected. Imagine if Mary had said no. Her yes has touched every person who has lived for two thousand years. You see, every decision made by every person echoes down through history.

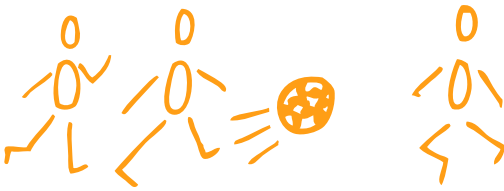
Sometimes I wonder if the reason we don’t have a cure for cancer, AIDS, and Alzheimer’s is because the people who were going to find those cures were among the fifty-five million children who have been aborted in the United States since *Roe v. Wade*. God had a plan for every one of those children, just as he has a plan for you. You have a part to play in God’s plan for the world.

You might be tempted to think, “Oh, I’m nobody special; God doesn’t have any special plans for me.” But that would be a mistake. Read Chapter 17 of the first book of Samuel for a great example. David’s father sent him to take food to his brothers, who were in the army. When he got there Goliath, the enormous and much feared Philistine, was daring the Israelites to fight him, but they were all too afraid. David said to king Saul, “I’ll fight him.” Saul told him he could not because David, who was little more than a child, was too young. David and Saul went back and forth and finally the king agreed. The rest is history. David slew Goliath, and in time God made this lowly shepherd boy the king of his people.

David made himself available.

God uses the most unlikely people to do his greatest work. As you read the Bible, you’ll discover that he almost never uses those in positions of power and authority; he doesn’t necessarily use the most educated, or the best looking, or even the most qualified. Whom does God use to do his most powerful work here on earth? He uses the people who make themselves available to him. How available are you to God? Ten percent, 50 percent, 95 percent? Or are you 100 percent available for whatever God calls you to today?

Want to see something truly incredible? Make yourself available to God.



DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. ARE YOU READY TO LET GOD COME AND FILL YOU UP IN ALL THE WAYS YOU NEED AND WANT TO BE FILLED?

2. WHAT HAVE YOU SAID YES TO IN THE PAST THAT YOU KNEW WAS NOT FOR YOU?

3. HOW AVAILABLE ARE YOU TO GOD TODAY?

The Pledge

God, the Father of infinite love and mercy,
I pledge to walk with you.

Thank you for the gift of life;
I pledge to live it to the fullest.

Thank you for sending your Son Jesus to redeem us;
I pledge to be his disciple.

Thank you for sending your Spirit to lead and direct us;
I pledge to follow his guidance.

Thank you for the gift of the Catholic Church;
I pledge to allow her to teach
and inspire me to live life to the fullest.

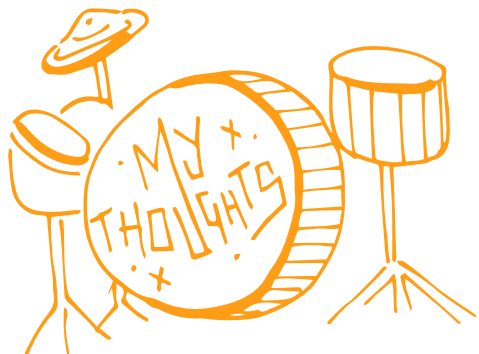
Help me to be patient with anything that I don't understand
about our incredible faith.

Fill me with joy so that I can always be a good witness
to your love and mercy in the world.

Give me wisdom, grace, and courage to live up
to this pledge I make to you today.

Amen.

Sign Here



Catholicism is
like a really old
treasure map.

its **OLD**.
BUT IT
STILL
LEADS TO



Treasure

GOD WANTS YOU TO BECOME
the **BEST**
VERSION
OF
YOURSELF

YOU ARE
CALLED
&
Chosen
BY GOD.

HOW WILL YOU
RESPOND?

THE **WORLD** IS A MESS
BECAUSE OF SELFISHNESS.

your **YES** can change the **WORLD**

124 **REVIEW**

We have covered tons of material throughout this program. Many of the ideas we have talked about with you are going to be part of your daily experience for the rest of your lives. I suspect you will spend the rest of your lives unpacking what we have discussed here in our short time together. So, I hope you will keep your workbook and that it will become a touchstone for your life. There will be times when you come to a decision point, and at those times I hope you will take out your workbook and review some of the key principles we have shared together as you have been preparing for Confirmation. I hope our paths cross somewhere along the way . . . and whether it is five, ten, or twenty years from now, I hope you will take out that workbook and show it to me. And as I flip through the pages I hope to find it dog-eared and worn out, with notes and highlighting everywhere. That will tell me that you have found that book to be a worthy companion for your journey.

Now let's take a look at some key messages from each of the sessions we have already experienced.

GOD WANTS
YOU TO BECOME
A GREAT
DECISION
MAKER.

YOU WERE MADE
FOR **MISSION**
Sin makes
us unhappy.

LIFE IS **Choices**
Holiness
IS POSSIBLE

God gives us **relationships** to help us become
the-best-version-of-ourselves.
He gives us relationships so that we can
help each other get to Heaven.

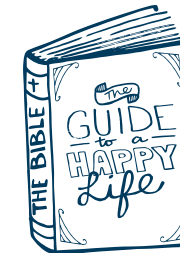
What's **HOLDING** **PRAY**
everyday
you back?

Anyone or anything that
doesn't help you become
the-best-version-of-yourself
is too small for you.



HAPPINESS IS THE RESULT
OF RIGHT LIVING.

ALLOW THE HOLY
SPIRIT TO LEAD
AND GUIDE YOU.
I HAVE NEVER MET ANYONE
WHO RELIED TOO MUCH ON
THE HOLY SPIRIT.



THE BIBLE
has the **POWER** to
transform your life.

REBEL
AGAINST THE **CULTURE**

JESUS WANTS TO TURN
YOUR
3117
UPSIDE DOWN,
AND THEN IT WILL BE
RIGHT SIDE UP.

There is a such thing as
UNIVERSAL TRUTH



CONFIRMATION
is a great opportunity
to start taking your
spirituality seriously.
You'll be glad you did.

THE CATHOLIC CHURCH
is the biggest family
in the WORLD



What do you think Mary did each day to stay focused on what matters most?

HOW DID MOSES PRAY?

Moses teaches us that to pray means to have intimate conversation with God. The Bible tells us that Moses went up the mountain, that God appeared to him in the burning bush, and that God and Moses had a real conversation. God gave Moses an assignment. Moses had questions. God talked Moses through his questions, and then sent him on his mission. Throughout his life as the leader of his people, Moses would withdraw to the mountain to pray before a big decision. How did he pray? He had intimate and personal conversation with God. (Exodus 33:11)

Wow, we have covered a lifetime of ideas. Now it's time to draw it all together.

Our lives change when our habits change. Throughout our time together I have been encouraging you to develop strong positive habits in your life. We spoke about using the Prayer Process to establish the habit of daily prayer. We explored dedicating a few minutes each day to reading the Bible. We spoke about getting to Mass each Sunday and honoring the Sabbath as a day of rest. We also explored how powerful frequenting the sacrament of Reconciliation can be. And we discussed how good friendships are one of the most powerful habits we can develop. Every habit we discussed was chosen because it will help you develop a dynamic relationship with God and become the-best-version-of-yourself.

Many years ago I was in Austria, and one night there was a huge storm. The next day I took a walk and there were trees down everywhere, and huge limbs ripped from other trees. But not far from where I was staying there was a park with soccer fields, and in the middle of the park there was a huge tree that looked like the storm hadn't even touched it. I stood there looking at it for a while.

That tree taught me this powerful lesson: A tree with strong roots can weather any storm.

There are going to be storms in your life. I don't know when, and you don't know when. They come mostly unannounced and unexpected. If we knew when they were coming we would prepare for them. But the storms of life don't announce themselves in advance. They rush upon the shores of our lives when we least expect them.

The habits we have discussed throughout this series are like strong roots. Sink them deep into your life and you will weather any storm. Don't wait for the storms to arrive, because by then it will be too late to sink the roots. On that day you either have strong roots or you don't.

These habits will also help you to become a great decision maker. You will discover that there are few life skills more practical than this one. We have discovered many decision points in our time together, and you will discover many more in the years ahead. I hope you are better equipped to make those decisions now.

Whatever habits you choose to make your own, whatever decisions you make along the way, they will determine the type of life you live.



Don't live a small life. That doesn't mean you need to do extraordinary things. To do the ordinary things extraordinarily well and with great love is to live the full measure of life. To live a small life is to be mean, fearful, greedy, distrustful of God and humanity, unhappy, and selfish. Don't live a small life. Live a life large enough to match your birthright as a son or daughter of God. Live joyfully and generously, with the kindness of the saints, trusting always in God, who loves you and wants good things for you.

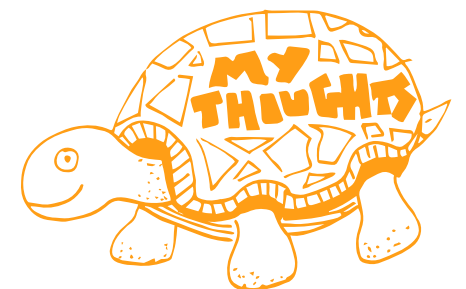


D·I·S·C·U·S·S·I·O·N QUESTIONS

1. WHAT NEW HABIT HAVE YOU DEVELOPED SINCE YOU STARTED THIS PROGRAM?

2. WHAT IS THE BEST IDEA YOU HEARD DURING THE ENTIRE EXPERIENCE?

3. WHAT IS ONE THING YOU CAN DO THIS WEEK TO BETTER PREPARE YOURSELF FOR CONFIRMATION?





Chas·ti·ty
[chas-i-tee]

sexual purity and self-control in thought, intention, and conduct

Why is chastity important?

What does the culture try to tell you about chastity?

What can you do to rebel against what the culture says about chastity?



As human beings we have many fabulous abilities, but God has bestowed on us two truly incredible gifts. The first is free will. We each have the ability to choose. The second is the ability to dream. Unlike any of the other creatures that God created, we can look into the future, imagine something better in the future, and then come back to the present and work in the present to bring about the future we have envisioned. Our ability to dream is an astounding gift.

So, what are your dreams? What dreams has God placed in your heart? You see, your dreams are your dreams for a reason. God has given us the ability to dream and placed certain dreams for good things in each of our hearts. What are your dreams? And what are you doing about them?

When I was a teenager I had a great soccer coach, but he was really tough on us. One day I got up in his face and screamed at him, "What do you want from me?" He looked at me calmly and said, "What do you want for yourself?"

Throughout your life there will be many people who want something from you. There will be relatively few who want absolutely nothing from you.

I don't want anything from you, but there are some things I want for you. I want you to experience the love of God in ways so powerful that you cannot resist embracing him with your whole heart, mind, and soul. I want you to become all he created you to be—the-very-best-version-of-yourself. I want you to experience the incredible joy that comes from saying yes to God and placing Jesus at the center of your life. I want you to be astounded by the genius of Catholicism. And after a long, full, and happy life filled with love, laughter, and dreams come true, I want you to die well and spend all of eternity with God in Heaven.

For four years I have been praying for you every day. And I am going to keep praying for you each day for the rest of my life. I pray that you have the courage and the wisdom to make these things we have discussed part of your life, and I pray that in your own way you will bring the love of God to others as they cross your path.

This time with you has been an honor. Thank you for allowing me to make this journey with you. I hope our paths cross again soon.

When I got married I was thirty-five years old, and for fifteen years I had been on the road, traveling from one city to the next. One of the things that I love about being married is that I have someone to pray with. There is something wonderful and powerful about praying with other people. Jesus said, "Wherever two or more are gathered in my name, I am there among them."(Matthew 18:20) Here we are, gathered in Jesus' name. If it weren't for him, we wouldn't be here right now. So let us close our eyes, and end our time together with prayer:

Loving Father,

We thank you for this day and for all your blessings.

Help us to remain always grateful for all you do for us and in us,

watch over in a special way today anyone who is hungry, lonely, depressed, addicted, unemployed, or just in need of the human touch,

and inspire us to realize that we are your partners in the work you wish to do in the world.

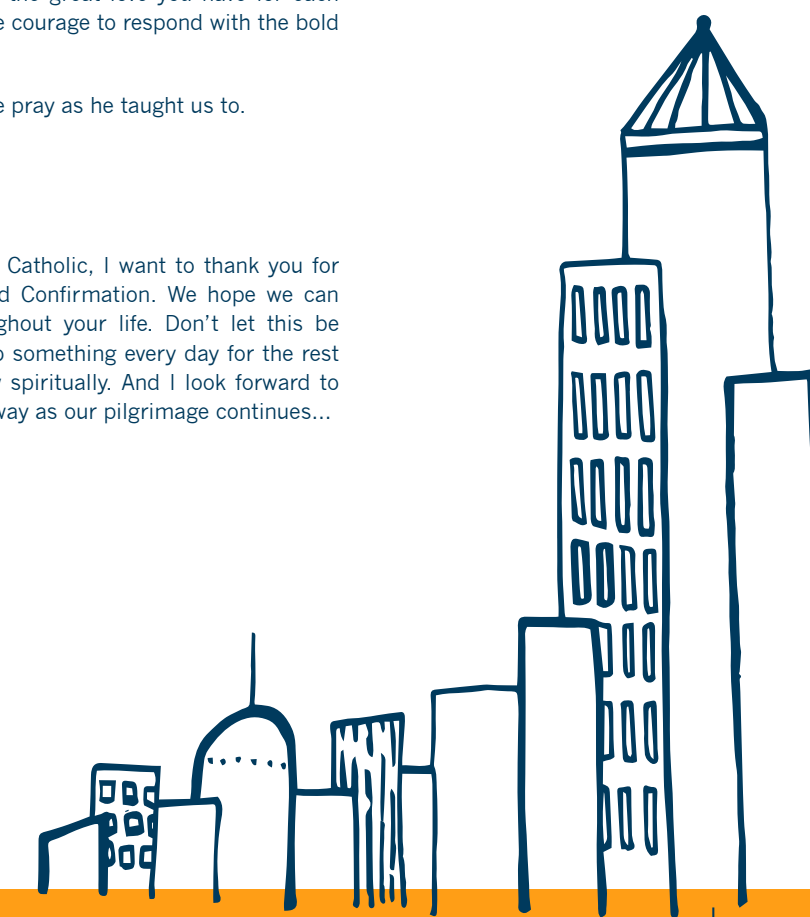
Help us to remain ever mindful of the great love you have for each and every one of us, and give us the courage to respond with the bold enthusiasm of a little child.

We ask all this in Jesus' name as we pray as he taught us to.

Our Father . . .

On behalf of everyone at Dynamic Catholic, I want to thank you for participating in this journey toward Confirmation. We hope we can serve you in powerful ways throughout your life. Don't let this be the end. Make a commitment to do something every day for the rest of your life that will help you grow spiritually. And I look forward to meeting you somewhere along the way as our pilgrimage continues...

**DON'T
LIVE
~a~
SMALL
LIFE.**

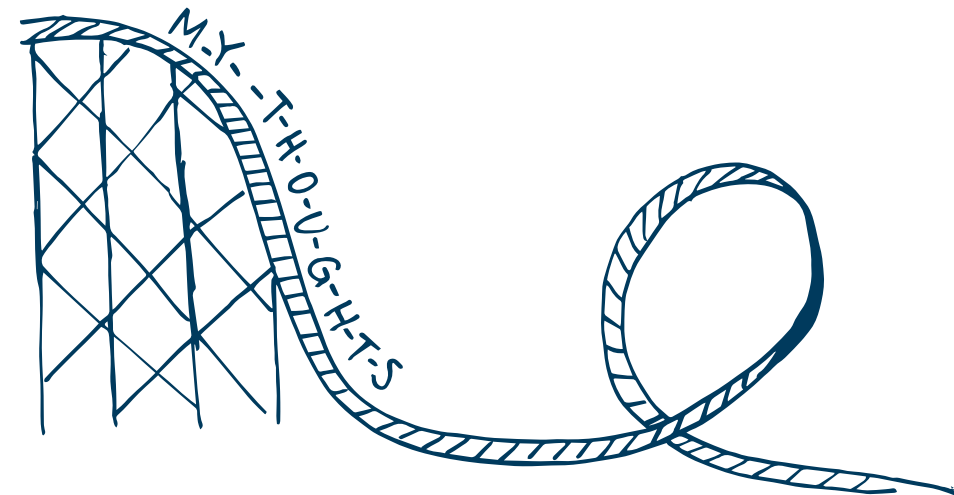


JOURNAL QUESTIONS

1. WHAT ARE YOUR DREAMS?

2. WHAT CROSS ARE YOU CARRYING AT THIS TIME IN YOUR LIFE?

3. WHAT DO YOU HOPE YOUR LIFE WILL BE LIKE FIVE YEARS FROM NOW?

[illegible]

Psalm 27

The Lord is my light and my salvation;
whom shall I fear?

The Lord is the stronghold of my life;
of whom shall I be afraid?

² When evildoers assail me,
uttering slanders against me,
my adversaries and foes,
they shall stumble and fall.

³ Though a host encamp against me,
my heart shall not fear;
though war arise against me,
yet I will be confident.

⁴ One thing have I asked of the Lord,
that will I seek after;
that I may dwell in the house
of the Lord all the days of my life,
to behold the beauty of the Lord,
and to inquire in his temple.

⁵ For he will hide me in his shelter
in the day of trouble;
he will conceal me under the
cover of his tent, he will set me
high upon a rock.

⁶ And now my head shall be lifted up
above my enemies round about me;
and I will offer in his tent
sacrifices with shouts of joy;
I will sing and make melody
to the Lord.

⁷ Hear, O Lord, when I cry aloud,
be gracious to me and answer me!

⁸ Thou hast said, "Seek ye my face."
My heart says to thee,
"Thy face, Lord, do I seek."

⁹ Hide not thy face from me.
Turn not thy servant away in anger,
thou who hast been my help.
Cast me not off, forsake me not,

O God of my salvation!

¹⁰ For my father and my mother have
forsaken me, but the Lord
will take me up.

¹¹ Teach me thy way, O Lord;
and lead me on a level path
because of my enemies.

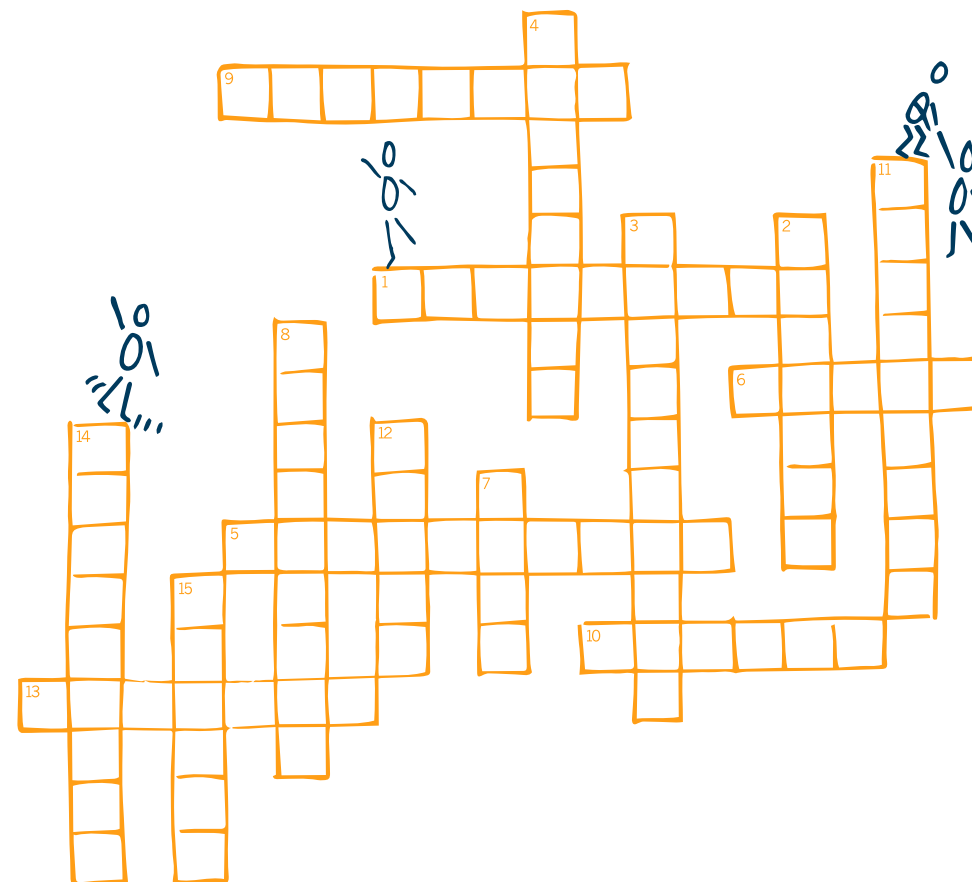
¹² Give me not up to the will
of my adversaries; for false witnesses
have risen against me,
and they breathe out violence.

¹³ I believe that I shall see the
goodness of the Lord in the land
of the living!

¹⁴ Wait for the Lord; be strong,
and let your heart take courage;
yea, wait for the Lord!

HOLINESS IS POSSIBLE

CROSSWORD PUZZLE



ACROSS

- Contains answers about the teachings of the Catholic Church
- Going beyond your own selfishness to give of your time, talent, and treasure to benefit others
- We all have a _____ to carry.
- A conclusion or resolution reached after consideration
- Showing modesty of one's self-importance
- Able to accept or tolerate delays, problems, or suffering without becoming annoyed or anxious

DOWN

- To accept or support willingly and enthusiastically
- Showing consideration for the needs of other people
- _____ is possible, and once we come to that realization everything changes and possibilities we never considered before open up before us.
- Anyone can create a single _____ moment.
- Experiencing pain, distress, or hardship
- Someone who believes that Jesus is the Messiah, that he walked the earth, was brutally murdered, and rose from the dead. Someone devoted to living as Jesus invites us to live.
- Our ability to _____ is an astounding gift.
- God uses the people who make themselves _____ to him.
- Nobody lived more fully than the _____.