

Chapter 10

The Fullness of Christian Life

Getting Started

Assign the students to read Chapter 10, "The Fullness of Christian Life." Use the following questions from the Student Text to guide a discussion of the chapter:

- How do you hear the voice of God?
- What do you think keeps people from focusing on their eternal salvation as a primary vocation?
- What are some ways that teens you know participate in the priestly, prophetic, and kingly offices of Christ?
- Describe a "little death" and a "little resurrection" that you have experienced.
- How do you think of heaven?

(See the Student Text for additional questions.) Then ask the students to read the following article.

Application Reading

<http://www.godspy.com/faith/On-the-Lay-Vocation-By-Janine-Langan.cfm>

NOTES ON THE LAY VOCATION

By Janine Langan

Everyone agrees: We need more priests. I, however, think that, more importantly, we need more lay people. For what is a layman, what is a lay woman? Not a born Christian who does not have the guts—or the gender—to become a priest, nor someone too spiritually challenged to enter a religious order. Being a lay person is indeed a vocation; a drastic choice, more fundamental even than that of priesthood, because it has to be made first, before specialization into the second. It is the choice to accept baptism. It is the choice freely to join the church, for better or for worse, for life. Infant baptism may hide this truth from many. But baptism is a gift. Like all gifts, it must be freely accepted to have its impact. Unless the receiver freely decides to use it and grow with it, it will go to waste. In fact, it will be resented.

Discussion

Lead the students in a discussion of the following questions:

1. Why does the author call the lay vocation "a drastic choice, more fundamental even than that of priesthood"?
It is the choice that has to be made first, before specialization in the priesthood or religious life: "It is the choice to accept baptism. It is the choice freely to join the church, for better or for worse, for life . . . choosing to be a Christian does indeed imply abandoning the free-wheeling independence of individualism in order to find one's identity in membership—literally becoming a member of the body of Christ."
2. What is the author say that the Church is and is not? What does the author say is its "project"?
"It is not a club of like-minded friends, or a coterie of the perfect; it is a nation used by Christ as his body in order to remain truly present at the heart of mankind. . . . The church is the extension of [Christ's] flesh so that His presence in the marketplace continues." Its project is to help save the world, to change history.
3. What are some of the things that the author and her colleagues discovered about young people in their "Christianity and Culture Program"?
For example: young Catholics are overwhelmed when they discover that the 'boring' Church to which they were dragged by their parents on Sundays is exciting, beautiful, at the very heart of human culture, and always skating on thin ice; they have in general no awareness of the role of the Church in the world, nor of their own potential participation in this role; that they have no idea how to access the Church's 'deposit of Faith' on their own; that non-Catholic Christians are fascinated by the immensity of this treasure; that non-Christians tend to be puzzled, surprised and fascinated by this encounter, and usually respond with respect, or leave in the first classes.
4. What are some of the basic tools that adult Christians need to live out their lay vocation, according to the author?

“Christians need to be able to feed off the Word of God and off the Sacraments. This implies basic formation in reading the Bible for spiritual growth. It also implies fundamental education in sacramental symbolism. . . . Finally, lay people need to know what the church teaches.”

5. Why does the author call the laity the “skin” of the Church?

Because it is the role of the laity to affect the world at large with Christ's teaching and presence.

6. What do you think you need in order to fully live out your lay vocation?

Activity

A mission statement for the lay vocation

- In this activity, students develop a mission statement around their lay vocation. The students will need paper and pencils for this activity; optionally, you may want to find some mission statements on the Internet to read to the students as examples. You may also want to play music appropriate for quiet reflection as the students work.
- Begin by reviewing the textbook material and the supplemental article “Notes on the Lay Vocation.” Ask students to identify the key components of the lay vocation. By the end of the discussion, students should recall that the vocation of the laity is to continue Christ’s mission in the world by bringing their faith into their everyday lives.
- Tell the students that they will begin to explore their lay vocation by developing a mission statement around it. Briefly explain to the students that many organizations, including many businesses, are guided by mission statements. Explain that a mission statement states the organization’s “mission” (purpose and goals) and the means the organization uses to achieve that mission, including its guiding values. If possible, read the students some examples of mission statements. Note that in order to be useful, most mission statements are short and to the point.
- Tell the students that their mission statement should address the purpose and goals of their lay vocation, as well as the means they will use to achieve those goals. Their mission statement should reflect not only their own dreams, but also some of what they have learned about the Christian vocation during this course.
- Circulate among the students as they work on their mission statements, offering encouragement and guidance as necessary.
- Conclude the activity by asking for volunteers to share their mission statements with the whole group. Discuss the mission statements in general by asking questions such as the following: How does your mission statement’s purpose and goals reflect the purpose and goals of Christ’s mission? How is it similar to the work of the ministerial priesthood, and how is it different? How important are the Church, the sacraments, and grace to helping you achieve your mission?

Additional Activities

- Have the students complete the “Prayer for a Good Death” activity in the Student Textbook (page 298).
- Lead the students in the quiet meditation described in step #6 under “Teaching Approaches” in the “Role Model” section of the Teacher’s Wraparound Edition.
- Lead the students in the prayer service described in step #4 under the Teaching Approaches heading in the “Chapter 10 Review” section of the Teacher’s Wraparound Edition.

Additional Resources

For Internet resources, see the Teacher’s Wraparound Edition.

The following videos are appropriate for use with this chapter:

- “Mary of Nazareth” (Questar, Ignatius Press)