

Name _____ Date _____

Handout 5-A

Reflection and Discussion Questions for *A Man for All Seasons*

Thoughtfully answer each question.

1. Explain the significance of the title *A Man for All Seasons* as it refers to St. Thomas More.

2. Identify the role and describe the following characters, with at least two specific sentences for each:

a. King Henry VIII

b. Richard Rich

c. Lady Alice

d. Meg

e. Will Roper

f. Duke of Norfolk

g. Thomas Cromwell

3. Identify at least six qualities/characteristics of St. Thomas More. Cite an example from the movie to illustrate each characteristic.

Handout 5-A continued

4. How is the worth of a person valued today? How should it be valued?

5. Explain how/why St. Thomas More could be a role model for us today.

6. What is the theme/message of *A Man for all Seasons*? What relevance does the film have in today's society?

7. In a good paragraph, argue for or against the following statements. You should cite examples from the movie in your response.

- Virtue cannot fully be relied upon and often does not pay (at least in the short term) when it comes to politics.
- Political corruption is dangerous, and virtue, in some degree, remains essential for ordered liberty.

Name _____ Date _____

Handout 5-B

Scripture on Authority

1. Read each of these Scripture verses that refer to how Christians are to act toward human authority. Summarize each in your own words.

Matthew 22:20–21

Romans 13:1

Hebrews 13:17

Titus 3:1

2. Keeping all of these verses in mind, come up with an example of how a Catholic Christian could uphold these exhortations in today's world.

Quotations on Conscience

Read the following quotations on conscience and thoughtfully answer the corresponding questions.

Deep within his conscience man discovers a law which he has not laid upon himself but which he must obey. Its voice ever calling him to love and to do what is good and to avoid evil, sounds in his hearts at the right moment. . . . For man has in his heart a law inscribed by God. . . . His conscience is man's most secret core and sanctuary. There he is alone with God whose voice echoes in his depth. (*Gaudium et Spes*, 16)

1. Explain *in your own words* what this quotation means.

2. When is a moment when your conscience sounded in your heart at the right moment?

Return to your conscience, question it. . . . Turn inward, brethren, and in everything you do, see God as your witness. (St. Augustine, quoted in *CCC*, 1779)

3. What does it mean to “turn inward”?

We must have a rightly informed conscience and follow it. But our judgments are human and can be mistaken; we may be blinded by the power of sin in our lives or misled by the strength of our desires “Beloved, do not trust every spirit, but put the spirits to a test to see if they belong to God” (1 John 4:1). Clearly, then, we must do everything in our power to see to it that our judgments of conscience are informed and in accord with the moral order of which God is creator. Common sense requires that conscientious people be open, humble, ready to learn from the experience and insight of others, willing to acknowledge prejudices and even change their judgments in light of better instruction.” (US Catholic Bishops, *To Live in Christ Jesus*)

4. Explain *in your own words* what this quotation means.

Handout 5-C continued

5. Who is someone in your life who can give you insights and experiences to help you form your conscience? Explain your answer.

Conscience is the umpire that “calls the play” in the game of morality, and the decision of conscience is final. . . . But beware of self-delusion, especially in these days when all kinds of evils are being justified under the banner of following your conscience. We are bound to take all reasonable steps to inform ourselves adequately in matters of morality and sin, and to listen sincerely to competent authority. (Edward Hayes, Paul Hayes, and James Drummey, *Catholicism and Life*)

6. What does this statement mean: “But beware of self-delusion, especially in these days when all kinds of evils are being justified under the banner of following your conscience”? Give examples to support your answer.

Conscience must be informed and moral judgment enlightened. A well-formed conscience is upright and truthful. It formulates its judgments according to reason, in conformity with the true good willed by the wisdom of the Creator. The education of conscience is indispensable for human beings who are subjected to negative influences and tempted by sin to prefer their own judgment and to reject authoritative teachings. (CCC, 1783)

7. Explain why it is important to educate our conscience with “authoritative teachings.”

Conscience is a precious but delicate guide. Its voice is easily distorted or obscured. To dictate to conscience is to silence and, eventually, to destroy it. Conscience must be listened to and listened to sensitively. It needs to be interrogated, even to be cross-examined. And only those who habitually interrogate their conscience and are ready to pay heed even to its awkward answers, will not cheat their conscience or be cheated by it. (Cormac Burke, *Conscience and Freedom*)

8. Explain *in your own words* what this quotation means.