

Session 8: Friendship with Jesus - Purity of Heart Parents' Guide

Unit One

This section is fairly straightforward. The key idea is that we should really 'go for it' in our spiritual lives, in order to become the people whom we are called to be in Jesus Christ. The saints are the examples, *par excellence*, of people who really 'went for it'. The problem is that instead of comparing ourselves to them, we compare ourselves to other people, who are maybe not even trying to love God with all their hearts. Then, instead of feeling inspired or challenged, we feel superior and self-satisfied - as if we are giving ourselves to God 'enough'. But our call is to give ourselves to God completely; for the Christian there is no 'enough'.

Your son/daughter will be asked to do a little research on a saint, which it would be great if you would do with them. This is not expected to be a massive work. Maybe 5 - 10 minutes reading or watching a good *Wikipedia* or *YouTube* biography should suffice. You might then help them answer some of the unit one questions, so that they will have something to say to their small group on Wednesday.

Unit Two

This unit will hopefully stimulate a meaningful conversation between you and your child. First will be a reflection on the influences on us from modern culture. Try to help your son/daughter identify the influences and pressures on us all to try to find happiness in things like money, power, body image, material things, sex & sexualized images, alcohol, drugs, other people, career success etc. etc.

Then, you will be asked to reflect a little on your life, and the things that have brought you the truest happiness in life. I hope - for this exercise to work - you will not find that it was the above listed things that were the source of true happiness for you!! Nevertheless, share whatever has been your experience.

It is then explained that, in the image and likeness of God, we are made for self-giving.

It would be useful if you had done some 'pre-reflection' before doing this unit with your son/daughter, so that you might have some idea what you would say in answer to these questions.

Unit Three

This unit consists mostly of a video about the Church's teaching on the gift of sexuality, and her message that this gift should be exercised exclusively within the context of marriage.

If you have any concerns, I encourage you to watch the video through yourself, and make any final determination as to whether you are happy for your child to see it. However, the video is perfectly age appropriate and it not in any way explicit in the nature of what is shown or the themes discussed.

The main and really important point of this unit is to communicate to our young people that the Church affirms the beauty and holiness of sex, but believes that such a holy gift should only be exercised within the free, total, faithful and fruitful (open to life) context of holy matrimony. Hopefully, the point will be understood from the previous units, that this is in marked contrast to the world's view.