

The Faith-Filled Catholic Women's Bible Study Program

A Leader's Guide for Group Discussion

Theme: Understanding
Song: "We Will Remember"
CD 2, Track 10

Insert U-1 through U-4
Composer: Susan J. Paul
Faith-Filled Catholic Women's Bible Music CD

Materials Needed

Faith-Filled Catholic Women's Bible and Music CD, CD player, Participant's Worksheet, Seeds, Potting Soil, Small Pots.

Setting the Stage

Before this session, mail (or e-mail) any member of the group that may not have been present at the last session the Participant's Worksheet for this session. Also, send a reminder of the date and time of the session as well as directions to the meeting place (if different from the church). To enhance an atmosphere of **Understanding**, have the song "We Will Remember" from the Faith-Filled Catholic Women's Bible Music CD playing in the background when the participants arrive.

Warm Up - Optional (10 minutes)

The purpose of this exercise is to demonstrate how difficult understanding is and how often it breaks down in the process of communicating information from one person to another. The leader begins this exercise by whispering the following sentence into the ear of the person on her right. Instruct each participant to whisper exactly what she heard to the person on her right until the message gets to the very last person in the group. Have that person say out loud what she understood the exact message to be. Then have the leader read the original message. To demonstrate how difficult this is, make up a new shorter sentence and try it again.

**A brown dog chased a maroon car driven by a girl with long blond hair
as her boyfriend held three tomatoes in a sack on his lap.**

Discuss how and where the group thinks the message changed along the way.

Opening Discussion (15 minutes)

Ask each participant to share her answers to the following questions: What does it mean to truly understand something? How can you tell if someone doesn't understand you? Why do you think understanding is so important when it comes to reading the Bible? After the discussion, read the **Plan and Purpose** article on insert page U-1. Ask the participants: How is understanding related to peace and contentment in the context of faith?

Spiritual Awakening - Opening Prayer

Pray together the **Prayer** at the top of insert page U-2.

Spiritual Awakening - Recognizing (5 minutes)

Ask a volunteer to prayerfully read each of the Scripture passages in the **Recognizing** section of **Spiritual Awakening** on insert page U-2. Remind the readers to pause after each verse for a few moments of silence to allow any participant to spontaneously share any special meaning that verse has for her.

Spiritual Awakening - Reflecting (15 minutes)

Read **John 8:31-59 (Page 157 NT)**. Then, ask the group to share their answers to these questions: How did the Jews respond to Jesus? Discuss the fact that this response came from people who said they believed in Jesus. How can this be? What does this same response look like in today's society? Do you ever catch yourself responding to a Catholic teaching in the same (or a similar) way? Read verses 42 and 43 again. Are there some teachings that we as a Church can't bear to hear? What about the phenomenon of being a cafeteria Catholic? Do we make this mistake in relation to some issues?

Faith in Action - (15 minutes)

Read the **Faith In Action** article on insert page U-4. Discuss answers to the following questions: Share your favorite story or any experience you have had where childhood innocence exposed a deeper understanding of some situation. How can having the understanding of a child help us to understand better God's purpose for our lives? Why do you believe Christ was so aware of the children around Him?

Group Prayer (5 minutes)

Leader: *God, our Father, help us to understand Your plan and purpose for us in life. Help us to realize that imitating the example of Your Son will never be easy – and that if we turn our back on Him by ignoring any part of His message, we are turning our back on You. We ask You to hear and answer our special prayers, praises and petitions today: **enter aloud all individual intentions.** Lead us to a fuller understanding of Your will as revealed in Scripture. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.*

Closing Prayer/Activity (10 minutes)

Read **Matthew 13:18-23 (Page 36 NT)**, the explanation of the "Parable of the Sower." As the song, "*We Will Remember*" plays softly in the background have each Participant, in silence, plant seeds in a small pot with potting soil. Close by all reciting together a "Glory Be."

Fellowship (15 minutes)

After the session is completed and while refreshments are served, play softly in the background: "*We Will Remember*" from the Faith-Filled Catholic Women's Bible Music CD.

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