

Love Is Our Mission

The Family Fully Alive

Chapter 4: Two Become One Reading Guide

If you have not yet done so, please watch the introductory video for Chapter 1. It will give you a window into the chapter and make your reading and study of the catechesis more fruitful.

It will be beneficial for you to spread your reading of the chapter over a number of sessions. Take time, like the Blessed Virgin Mary, to consider in your mind what these things might mean (Lk 1: 29) and then ponder them in your heart (Lk 2:19 & 2:51).

1. Before reading

Begin your time with a prayer, asking for God's help to understand what you are about to read. Here is a traditional Catholic prayer asking the Holy Spirit for assistance:

Come Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of your faithful and kindle in them the fire of your love.

V. Send forth your Spirit, and they shall be created.

R. And You shall renew the face of the earth.

Let us pray.

O, God, who by the light of the Holy Spirit, did instruct the hearts of the faithful, grant that by the same Holy Spirit we may be truly wise and ever enjoy His consolations. Through Christ Our Lord. Amen.

2. Reading the catechesis

Rather than reading the chapter straight through, read it one section at a time. For example, in chapter four there are three sections, each with its own heading. The first is "Virtue, love, and goodness help fulfill our destiny" and it covers paragraphs 54-57.

Begin by asking yourself what the subheading probably means. Then read and reread the section from start to finish at a rate comfortable for you. Underline what you consider to be especially important statements and write questions and comments in the margins. These are great active reading techniques.

3. After reading a section

After reading the section, take some time to "digest" what you have just read. One way to do this is by responding to the text.

We recommend you answer in writing, *one* of the following generic questions or *one* of the directed questions. The generic questions can be asked of any section of this book. The directed questions pertain to the section specifically.

Generic questions

- What did you think the heading meant before you read the section? Has your understanding of it changed after reading?
- What most surprised or impacted you in this section?
- What most confused you or what did you disagree with the most in this section?
- If you were to summarize this section, what would you say it was about in one or two sentences?
- What action does this section call you to take? Does this change seem possible to you? What barriers do you think would stand in the way of you taking this action?

The following are directed questions for each section of this chapter. Choose *one* of them to answer in writing if you don't select one of the generic questions. A space is provided for you to write your response.

Virtue, love, and goodness help fulfill our destiny

Directed questions

- What does this statement mean: "Marriage is a uniquely intimate form of friendship that calls a man and a woman to love each other in the manner of God's covenant" (p. 41)?
- Why are virtues necessary for marital love? What are some most necessary and why?
- Why are "interior freedom and the capacity for self-gift" more important in marriage than romance (§56)?
- Why can't a marriage based on sexual desire endure?

Your response:

Genuine love makes a commitment

Directed questions:

- Why is marriage "risky" (§58)?
- What does the Church offer spouses so that the covenant of matrimony is "a real and possible commitment" (§59)?
- In cohabitation or trial marriages, why is the attitude "I'll love you completely when I/we solve these problems" a big mistake?

- In marriage, how can you “make yourself grow . . . [and] act so that the other grows” (§60)?
- What does this statement mean to you: “This fear of ‘forever’ is cured by entrusting oneself day by day to the Lord Jesus in a life that becomes a daily spiritual path of common growth, step by step” (§60)?

Your response:

Good marriages are built on virtues, especially mercy and chastity

Directed questions

- Why do the words “please, thank you, and sorry” summarize the art of living together (§61)?
- Why is the virtue of chastity so important in marriage (§62)?
- Why is the virtue of mercy so important in marriage?
- What is your response to this statement in light of this chapter: “Marriage is nothing but a particular way of living the New Covenant”?
- Why are eroticism and contract inadequate bases for marriage?
- In a sacramental marriage, how does the Church offer us “shelter, grace, and a daily lesson in the nature of God’s love” (§66)?

Your response: