



Gathering Guide Materials

C.H.R.I.S.T Discipleship Path Tour

WEEK 2 – September 28–October 4

The Discipleship Path is a roadmap for deepening your relationship with Christ.

BEGIN YOUR GROUP MEETING WITH AN OPENING PRAYER:

Loving Father, you call each of us to be holy – not in distant or unreachable ways, but right here, in our daily lives. Today we gather as disciples of Your Son, Jesus, to learn from His life and His teachings. Open our hearts to Your Word. Help us set aside distractions, turn away from sin, and grow in prayer, the sacraments, and healing grace. Make us eager to live with patience, gentleness, and love, as You guide us on the path to holiness. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Last week, we considered the C in Christ: Community. We learned how important Community is to discipleship and our faith journeys. In community, we receive the benefits of Church family, of a place to belong, to love and be loved, to test our thoughts and feelings, to grow closer to God by exploring His love and His Word together. And in community, we have responsibilities to others: to care for each other (especially those less fortunate than ourselves), to act justly, to live with honesty and integrity, and to reflect God's love and mercy.

This week, we build on the starting point of community to consider what it means to be holy.

VIEW THIS WEEK'S VIDEOS ON YOUR PARISH TOUR HOME PAGE

ST. JOHN VIANNEY

ST. MARY CHURCH

CLICK HERE TO VIEW THIS WEEKEND'S READINGS

H is for HOLINESS

A disciple grows through prayer, the sacraments, and healing.

Being holy seems like such a lofty goal. But holiness is really about how we live our lives, each and every day. Defined simply, holiness means setting ourselves apart, separating ourselves from sin and the forces of evil in order to grow ever closer to God.

And the best teacher for living our lives is Jesus, Himself. Studying the way He lived His life and the Way He instructed us to live our own lives, we can grow in holiness.

This weekend's readings give us some pointers to follow, the things to do – and the things not to do – as we strive for holiness.

In the first reading, [Amos 6:1a, 4-7] we are cautioned what not to do: no complacency! The reading goes on to talk about the behaviors of those who are smug, self-satisfied or self-righteous: being couch potatoes; taking more than our fair share; being excessive with material goods; giving ourselves the very best when others go without.

The **responsorial psalm** [Psalm 146:7, 8-9, 9-10] offers us wisdom: keep our faith forever, secure justice for the oppressed, give food to the hungry, lift up those who are down, protect strangers.

Similarly, **the second reading** [1 Timothy 6:11-16] gives us guidance for being holy: pursue righteousness, devotion, faith, love, patience, and gentleness; sustain our faith; stay focused on eternal life in heaven; keep the commandments.

Our **Alleluia** [2 Corinthians 8:9] again reminds us that we become rich by being poor, just as Jesus made us rich by becoming poor.

And our **Gospel** [Luke 16:19-31] give us a dire warning: if we, rather than living lives of holiness, we live our lives focused on our possessions, our clothing, or our fine food, we may not find ourselves enjoying eternal life with God.

A Disciple Knows Jesus...Through HOLINESS

We are all disciples, followers of Jesus, always learning from Him.

And a disciple knows Jesus through Holiness.

Holiness is vital for us as disciples because it helps us to foster a deeper relationship with Jesus: when we take the time to study Jesus and the way He lived His life, we begin the path to holiness; and when we follow the model He gave us for living our own lives, we draw ourselves closer to Him, becoming ever more like Him.

As we embrace holy practices, we find ourselves changing, becoming increasingly attuned to Jesus' teachings and example.

And when we live our faith authentically, we attract others to Jesus, showing His love and mercy in everyday kindnesses.

Questions for Consideration and Dialog

- How would you describe "holiness"?
- Who exemplifies holiness for you and what about them inspires you?
- How do the lessons on holiness from this week's readings surprise you? Challenge you?
- What joys do you experience or give when you practice holiness?
- What behaviors do you need to embrace or abandon to become more holy?

Action You Can Take

The Bible is a goldmine of ways to be holy! Here are some golden nuggets to consider:

Remember that God created us to be holy. St. Paul reminds us, "For He chose us in Him before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in His sight;" *Hebrews 12:14* and "It is God's will that you should be sanctified." *1 Thessalonians 4:3*

Choose to be holy. St. Peter instructs us, “as He Who called you is holy, be holy yourselves in every aspect of your conduct, for it is written, ‘Be holy because I [am] holy.’” *1Peter 1:15-16*

Live a peaceful life. “Make every effort to live in peace with everyone and to be holy; without holiness no one will see the Lord.” *Hebrews 12:14*

Practice the fruits of holiness. “The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control.” *Galatians 5:22-23*

Share the Good News of God’s goodness. “Sing the praises of the LORD, you His faithful people; praise His holy name.” *Psalms 30:4*

Control your thoughts. “Whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy—think about such things.” *Philippians 4:8*

Help others to be holy. “For them I sanctify myself, that they too may be truly sanctified.” *John 17:19*

Here are ideas for you as you seek to know Jesus in Holiness:

PRAY

- Pray for people in your life who have neither faith nor the desire to become holy.
- Examine your conscience at the end of each day and consider not only the things you are doing that are holy, but also the things you are not doing that help keep yourself holy.

ACT

- Join your parish community at St. John Vianney on October 3 at 6pm for a special First Friday Mass dedicated to peace in our nation.
- Begin (or increase) your study of the Bible, especially the New Testament, seeking guidance for your own life from the way Jesus led His.

INSPIRE

- Actively seek opportunities to serve others, especially strangers, thereby demonstrating God’s love and bringing them closer to holiness.
- Exhibit joy and grace in all that you do, especially in difficult situations that can tempt one to behave in less-than-holy ways.

Close your group meeting with:

- **Intersessions for the Group:** Take some time to pray together for the group members.

CLOSING PRAYER:

Lord Jesus, You showed us by Your own life what true holiness looks like: humility, compassion, justice, and mercy. As we go forth from this time together, strengthen us to live as your disciples, to seek You in prayer, to receive you in the sacraments, and to share your love with our community and to everyone we meet.

May our daily choices set us apart for you, drawing others to your light. Holy Spirit, guide our steps so that holiness becomes our way of life. We make this prayer in your name, Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**