



Seeking Healing

IN PURSUIT: SEEKING THE MORAL LIFE
SESSION 03

Overview:

This third session will start to break open the concept of sin and the role of Jesus in our healing and redemption from sin.

In this session, we meet a new hero, Marina Garcia. Marina will wrestle with her own questions about the brokenness of the world and what to do about it. She will talk to a friend, a therapist, and a priest on her journey of discovery.

This session has approximately 12 minutes of video segments.

Theme Scripture:

MARK 10:45

"The Son of Man came and gave his life as a ransom for the many."

A Key to Using this Guide:

ANYTHING IN ITALICS: Important information for leaders. Not necessary to share with the group.

REGULAR FONT: To be shared aloud with the group.

LEADER TIPS: Check out the “Leader Tip” boxes in the margins for helpful hints.

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Connect

1. Check-In

It is always good to check-in and ask, "How was your week?" demonstrating that you care about what is going on beyond your small group. You can ask generally or have them share "Highs and Lows." (High - best part of your week; Low - worst part)

2. Accountability

Ask how their COMMIT challenge from last week went.

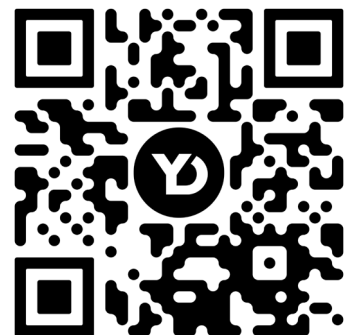
In the last session of The Invitation, your group was introduced to the concept of "The 5 S's of Accountability." These are 5 things that a disciple should be striving toward. Check in each time you meet to see how everyone is progressing.

The 5 S's of Accountability: Service, Praying with Scripture, Sacraments, Overcoming Sin, Sharing Jesus with Others

3. Optional Activity

This session's optional activity is a screen game that you can run with any smart device. Scan the QR code to choose your game.

These games were shared with YDisciple from our friends at ProjectYM. Want even more great screen games? Visit their website: <https://projectymgames.com/>



4. Opening Prayer

Read the theme verse, Mark 10:45 (found on the first page of this guide) and then lead them in a prayer thanking God for the opportunity to be together and the opportunity to grow in faith, inviting the Holy Spirit to guide your time together. Conclude with a prayer together such as the Our Father, Glory Be, or Hail Mary.

Discuss

We've spent the first couple of episodes talking about what is good, what is fulfilling. But we can't talk about the moral life without acknowledging what is broken.

In this next set of videos, we are going to meet a new "hero," Marina Garcia. We will be journeying alongside her as she asks questions about the brokenness of the world and our role in it.

Watch Video Segment #1

- **WHAT IS BROKEN ABOUT THE WORLD WE LIVE IN? LET'S LIST AS MANY THINGS AS YOU CAN THINK OF.**

As Christians, we believe that the world isn't just broken, it is fallen. Marina uses that word in the video. If something falls it first has to be elevated. God made the world good. In fact, you will find the word "good" seven times in the first chapter of Genesis.

Let's take some time to read what happened just 2 chapters later in Genesis 3.

Look up Genesis 3:1-7

Read it aloud while everyone follows along in their bibles. Encourage everyone to think about what's happening.

READ

- **WHO DOES THE SNAKE/SERPENT TALK TO FIRST?** *Eve.*
- **WHAT IS THE FIRST THING THE SERPENT SAYS TO HER?** *"Did God really say, 'You shall not eat of the fruit of any of the trees in the Garden?'"*
- **WHERE IS ADAM WHILE THE SERPENT IS TALKING TO EVE?** *Right next to her.*

Leader Tip

Consider writing these on a board or a piece of paper so they can see the list. Ask one of the group to write so you can involve other people.

Leader Tip

Your students might bring up that this account contradicts what we have learned from science. This is a great opportunity to affirm that the Church believes in scientific discovery. Many theologians believe that the beginning of Genesis is written, not as history, but as allegory. But the truths that it reveals about humanity and about God are very real. The Catechism states: "The account of the fall in Genesis 3 uses figurative language, but affirms a primeval event, a deed that took place at the beginning of the history of man. Revelation gives us the certainty of faith that the whole of human history is marked by the original fault freely committed by our first parents" (CCC 390).

- **WHAT IS THE SERPENT'S RESPONSE TO EVE TELLING HIM GOD'S COMMAND ABOUT THE FRUIT OF THE TREE?** *"You will not die!"*
- **IS THIS TRUE?** *No.*
- **WHAT IS THEIR RESPONSE AFTER THEY EAT THE FRUIT?** *Shame/hiding.*

REFLECT

Read the passage out loud again.

- **WHO DO YOU THINK THE SERPENT REPRESENTS?** *Traditionally, we believe that the serpent represents the devil.*
- **WHAT IS SIGNIFICANT ABOUT THE SERPENT'S FIRST WORDS?** *His first temptation is to make Eve doubt God.*
- **WHEN YOU HEARD THIS STORY BEFORE, WHERE DID YOU PICTURE ADAM?** *Most will say far away/not there.*
- **WHY MIGHT IT BE SIGNIFICANT THAT HE IS WITH HER WHEN SHE IS TEMPTED?** *It's not completely Eve's fault. He did nothing to intervene.*

REACT

Read the passage one more time.

God made everything originally good. And God also gave us free will - the ability to choose right or wrong, to choose to love Him or not. And it's through the way that our first parents chose to use their free will that sin entered the world. This is where we get the doctrine of original sin, the sin that occurred at the origin of the human race.

Leader Tip

Help them find the passage. Some of your group may not be familiar with how to use the Bible, but may be too embarrassed to admit it.

Leader Tip

These "READ" questions might seem superficial, but they are important both for cementing the scene in the reader's mind and for getting conversation moving. If we begin by asking simple, concrete questions, we can move to more complex, abstract questions down the line.

Leader Tip

[CCC definition of original sin]
Fr. BP, would you help us find a succinct definition of Original Sin

- **C. S. LEWIS ARGUED THAT THE EXISTENCE OF ORIGINAL SIN IS PERHAPS ONE OF THE MOST OBVIOUS FACTS OF HUMAN LIFE, EVEN TO NON-BELIEVERS. WHY DO YOU THINK LEWIS SAID THIS?** *Almost everyone agrees that the world is broken. To quote the first YDisciple series, The Invitation, “The world is full of broken people breaking people.”*
- **WHAT ARE SOME THINGS THAT TEMPT US TO DOUBT GOD OR NOT TRUST HIM?** *It will be helpful for you to share a story. Your transparency will give them permission to do likewise.*
- **ONE OF THE MOST DIFFICULT THINGS TO ACCEPT ABOUT FAITH IN GOD’S GOODNESS IS THAT THERE IS SO MUCH EVIL IN THE WORLD. AFTER TAKING A CLOSER LOOK AT THIS NARRATIVE, HOW MIGHT YOU RESPOND TO SOMEONE WHO ASKS, “IF GOD IS GOOD, WHY IS THERE EVIL IN THE WORLD?”** *God made the world good. Evil is the result of humanity’s choices. God doesn’t cause evil.*

Many saints, St. Augustine being one, use the analogy of cold when explaining evil. In science, cold isn’t actually a thing in itself, it is the absence of heat. Similarly, evil isn’t something that was created, but it is an absence of good, an absence of God. God didn’t create evil, he created everything good. Evil exists when we remove ourselves from God.

- **JUMP TO VERSE 16. HAVE A STUDENT READ IT ALOUD. WHAT DO YOU THINK THIS IS ALLUDING TO?** *A redeemer. Jesus.*

Notice that God doesn’t leave us in our brokenness. He IMMEDIATELY promises to fix it.

Watch Video Segment #2

- **WHAT IS SOMETHING THAT STOOD OUT TO YOU IN THAT CLIP?**



Trisha Galvan

Trisha Galvan is a licensed therapist in Austin, Texas. She is the founder and owner of Divine Mercy Counseling. She has worked closely with the homeless and runaway youth population. Beyond her profession, she has also volunteered for many years as a youth ministry leader within a Catholic Filipino lay community. You can learn more about Trisha at: www.divinemercycounseling.com

- **FR. NORM INTERRUPTS MARINA WHEN SHE IS POINTING OUT THE BROKENNESS IN THE WORLD. HE STOPS HER AND SAYS, “WE AREN’T JUST POINTING OUT, WE ARE POINTING IN,” REFERENCING THE OLD SAYING, “WHEN YOU POINT A FINGER, THERE ARE THREE FINGERS POINTING BACK AT YOU.” WHAT DO YOU THINK HE MEANS HERE?**

G.K. Chesterton is known for answering the question “What’s wrong with the world?” with two simple words: I am. We cannot point out the brokenness in the world without admitting our own brokenness.

St. John Paul II said that structures of sin are rooted in personal sin (Sollicitudo Rei Socialis, 1987). Fr. Norm points out to Marina that we can’t point out the problems in the world without honestly examining our own choices.

- **WHAT IS SIN? LET’S THROW OUT ANY WORD YOU ASSOCIATE WITH SIN.** *The word “sin” comes from the Greek word “sinum,” an archery term for “missing the mark”.*
- **MARINA REFERS TO AN IMAGE OF THE CHRIST THE REDEEMER, OR CRISTO REDENTOR, STATUE IN RIO DE JANEIRO, BRAZIL. WHERE ELSE DO WE USE THE WORD “REDEEM”?** *The dictionary definition of redeem is “To gain possession of (something) in exchange for payment.”*

In Jesus’ time, to redeem meant to buy back someone who was sold into slavery. If you were a slave, you were in somebody else’s power. There was nothing a slave could do to get free; they were helpless. You were subject to the will of your master, ultimately powerless. In the Old Testament, it was the responsibility of a family member to rescue a relative’s life from slavery. This family member was called “the redeemer”. The price paid for freedom was called “the ransom.”



Fr. Norm Fischer

Fr. Norman Fischer is an artist and priest of the diocese of Lexington, Kentucky. He has worked as a parish priest and high school chaplain. Learn more about him and his work at: <https://www.finearteditions.net/artists/norman-fischer/>

Leader Tip

Pull up an image of this statue on your device or have them look it up.

Leader Tip

You are likely to get answers around transactions, coupons, and money. Ask follow up questions like “What was Jesus paying for?”

Look up and have someone read aloud Mark 10:45.

Jesus is the family member, sent by the Father, to pay the ransom, to set you free from slavery to sin.

- **HOW IS SIN LIKE SLAVERY?** *There is something called habitual sin. Sins that we have done so much that we do them without thinking and they are really hard to stop. It is like an addiction to sin.*
- **THE CHURCH TEACHES THAT SIN WEAKENS THE WILL AND DARKENS THE INTELLECT. WHAT WOULD A “WEAKENED WILL” OR A “DARKENED INTELLECT” LOOK LIKE?** *A weakened will finds it difficult to choose the good. A dark intellect is clouded from considering what is good. Give some examples.*
- **WHAT ELSE DO YOU REMEMBER ABOUT MARINA DESCRIBING THE CHRISTO REDENTOR STATUE?** *They projected a doctor’s coat on it.*
- **ONE OF THE TITLES OF JESUS IS THE “DIVINE PHYSICIAN.” WE THINK OF JESUS HEALING INSTANTANEOUSLY (THE BLIND MAN, THE PARALYTIC, ETC.), BUT THE IMAGE OF A PHYSICIAN IS DIFFERENT. A PHYSICIAN TAKES TIME, LOOKS CLOSELY, AND OFTEN WE NEED TO TELL A DOCTOR WHAT HURTS. THEN THE DOCTOR GIVES A PRESCRIPTION OR PHYSICAL THERAPY ETC. AND THAT TAKES TIME TO WORK. AND WE HAVE TO GO BACK TO THE DOCTOR AGAIN AND AGAIN. HOW IS THIS LIKE OUR RELATIONSHIP WITH JESUS?**

Leader Tip

Now would be a great time to talk about confession with your group. Going to confession is like going back to the doctor again and again to get to the root of our sickness, which in this case is sin.

Leader Tip

The conversation after clip 2 might go long. We strongly recommend NOT trying to wrap it up quickly to get to the next clip. If you need to, spread this conversation out over a couple of meetings. Good conversation is better than “getting through” the content.

Watch Video Segment #3

We’re going to reread that line from the Easter Vigil Mass:

“Our birth would have been no gain, had we not been redeemed. O wonder of your humble care for us! O love, O charity beyond all telling, to ransom a slave you gave away your Son! O truly necessary sin of Adam, destroyed completely by the Death of Christ! O happy fault that earned so great, so glorious a Redeemer!”

- **REMEMBER: THE FALL IS WHAT WE CALL THE STORY WE READ IN GENESIS 3. WHY WOULD THIS PRAYER CALL THE FALL HAPPY?**
- **MARINA SAYS, “JESUS DIDN’T JUST REDEEM THE WORLD FROM SLAVERY TO SIN, HE REDEEMS ME FROM MY SLAVERY TO SIN. FROM MY PRIDE, MY NEED FOR OTHERS TO BE PERFECT.” WHAT AREAS OF YOUR LIFE DO YOU NEED JESUS TO REDEEM?**
- **THERE IS A LOT OF TALK EARLY IN THIS VIDEO ABOUT “CONTROL”. HOW DOES OUR NEED TO CONTROL RELATE TO WHAT WE READ IN GENESIS?** *Life and happiness with God were traded for a temptation to control: “You will be like gods.”*

So let’s recap: In our free will we can choose to sin, but sin leads to brokenness in ourselves, in our relationships, and in the world. We cannot save ourselves from our brokenness, but Jesus does. In his redemption of us, we find healing. This healing leads to freedom. Spoiler alert: This kind of freedom is what we are talking about in the next session.

Commit

Closing Prayer

Socrates said, “The unreflected life is not worth living.” It is important to reflect every day, examining our relationship with God. St. Ignatius of Loyola is credited with a simple method of doing this called “The Examen.” We will do it together and then your commitment for the week will be to do it every evening before you go to bed.

Remember this is a prayer, a conversation with God, so let’s begin with the Sign of the Cross.

The first step is remembering that we are in God's presence and his love for us. Remember that even as we reflect on our failings that God brings them to light because he loves us and wants us to be better, not to accuse us. Let's take 30 seconds of silence to remember that he is here and he loves you.

[Pause for 30 seconds]

The second step is to ask for his grace to see your life honestly, to see it as he sees it.

[Pause for 30 seconds]

St. Ignatius' third step is gratitude. What are you thankful for today? Thank God silently in your heart.

[Pause for 30 seconds]

The fourth step is to look at your day and reflect on what you could have done better. What sins did you fall into today? How did you act contrary to God's love? Tell him you're sorry.

[Pause for 30 seconds]

Finally, ask God for the grace to do better tomorrow.

Finish with an Our Father, remembering that we have a Father in Heaven who loves us.

Leader Tip

At the end of doing the Examen together remind them that this does not replace the sacrament of Reconciliation.

Commitment

Pray through the Examen at least once before we meet next.

Follow-up Checklist

- Send the Parent Sheet.
- Remind them to bring a Bible to every meeting.
- Consider sending them a reminder between sessions of the COMMIT.
- Pray!