

Lent 2006



Small Faith Sharing Group
Reflection Guide
Cycle B



Developed by
The Office For
Evangelization
& the Advisory
Committee on
Evangelization

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Introduction

This Lent 2006 Small Faith-Sharing Group Reflection Guide is prepared for small faith-sharing group members in Catholic parishes and communities. The Reflection Guide combines Cycle B readings of the Sunday Lectionary with meditations, reflection questions and the Objectives from the Personal Mandate of Spreading the Holy Fire: A Plan for Catholics Evangelizing in the Archdiocese of Chicago (available at the end of this document and at www.goingforth.org).

The Season of Lent offers a time to reflect on the direction of our lives, pay attention to the Gospel message and change our lives to live more in harmony with God. The Season of Lent prepares us to focus on the central mystery of God's plan of salvation: the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. The Season of Lent offers a unique opportunity for evangelizing.

Each week offers the grace to gather with other disciples of Christ. As we encounter Jesus in a new way, we grow to *believe* more deeply in Him. Our shared experience and belief empower us to *share* our faith with others. Together, we take our deepened belief into personal relationships in family, friends, the workplace, our parish, neighborhoods and nation to *transform* the world into God's Reign: a kinder, better, more loving place. Believe, share, transform: this is what it means to be a disciple of Jesus, to be a Catholic, and to evangelize.

As a member of a small faith-sharing group, you will gather weekly with others to grow in faith. Be open to the process of growth that comes from sharing. Be open to the gift of holiness. Take responsibility for your own participation and encourage others to take part. The entire group benefits and grows together. As a small group member, please follow these guidelines:

- Prepare** Get ready for the meetings by reading the Scriptures and reflection material before the meeting.
- Participate** Show up. Read the Scriptures when asked. Respond aloud to the reflection questions. However, you may choose to "pass" at any time without explanation.
- Pray** Pray for the group leader, the other members of the group and for yourself between meeting times.
- Be Present** Attend all meetings unless pressing circumstances prevent it.
- Be Personal** Talk about your own experience and share your own thoughts about how God speaks to you through the Scripture. Listen to the stories of others in the group and refrain from giving advice.
- Be Confidential** What is shared in the group stays in the group. Realize that some areas may be too sensitive for people to respond to the faith-sharing questions or share an insight.
- Be Gentle** If differences of opinion arise, respect those differences. There are as many ways to experience God's presence as there are people. We are all growing and on the journey together. Make the effort to understand another's viewpoint by being tender and kind. (Ephesians 4:15).

May this time be a rich experience of God's love that leads you to share that love with others.

Cycle B

The Gospel of Mark

Insights on Evangelization

The Scripture readings for the 2005-2006 Liturgical Year are from Cycle B of the Sunday Lectionary. In Cycle B, Sunday liturgies draw their Gospel readings from Mark.

Author/Audience

The Gospel of Mark is believed to be the earliest of the four written Gospels. The authorship of the Gospel is uncertain. Traditionally it has been assigned to John Mark, who was a cousin of Barnabas and an early disciple in the Christian community. John Mark accompanied Paul and Barnabas on their missionary journeys. Modern research proposes that the author may have been a Hellenistic Jewish Christian from Syria. Scripture scholars believe that the Gospel was written to the Gentiles, who did not know Jewish customs and traditions. The timing suggests that the Gospel was written to help disciples persevere in their faith during a time of persecution. Scholars estimate that the Gospel of Mark was written around the year 70 AD.

Message and Themes

Mark's Gospel is the shortest of the four Gospels. Mark tells a vivid and dynamic story about Jesus' life, teaching and actions. The pace of the story is urgent and calls the reader to make a decision to act without hesitation. The Gospel of Mark gets right to the point. The opening verse states that this is the Good News of Jesus Christ, Son of God. Peter confesses Jesus as Messiah in response to Jesus question (Mark 8:29), "Who do you say that I am?" (It's not about what others say, it's about what we say.) The accounts of Jesus' dramatic healing and exorcisms show God's powerful activity breaking into human history to bring freedom from sin and death. The center of Jesus' saving activity is the cross - the heart of Jesus' mission and work. Mark shows that Jesus' disciples play an important role. The disciples are present in almost every scene of Mark's Gospel. The first disciples follow Him right away (only 16 verses into the Gospel!)

How the Gospel of Mark Relates to Evangelizing

As in Mark's Gospel, we are disciples of Jesus, who calls us to an important role in announcing the gospel in our times. Reflect upon these key insights from Mark's Gospel for evangelizing:

- Commit:** In Chapter 1, verse 16 of Mark's Gospel, the first disciples were called to follow Jesus. They responded immediately. *How do I respond and commit to follow Jesus to become a "fisher of people?"*
- Believe:** In Chapter 8, verse 29, Jesus asked His disciples, "Who do you say that I am?" Peter responded, "You are the Messiah." *How do I confess Jesus and grow in my relationship with Him?*
- Share:** In Chapter 15, verse 39, the Roman centurion witnessed how Jesus died on the cross and proclaimed, "Truly this man was the Son of God!" *How does my life give witness so that "outsiders" come to see God's love for them?*
- Transform:** In Chapter 16, verses 19-20, Jesus ascended to God's right hand and the disciples went everywhere to preach the Good News. Jesus worked with them with accompanying signs. *How does my activity propel me to go everywhere to bring about God's Reign?*

Source: Fr. Donald Senior, C.P. and PHEME PERKINS, *Gospel of Mark, Reading Guide, The Catholic Study Bible, New American Bible, Oxford Press, pages RG405-RG417, pages 65-68*. See these articles for more detail on this Gospel.

Introduction to All Small Faith Sharing Sessions

PREPARE THE ENVIRONMENT

Optional: Cover a small table with a purple cloth and place a cross on it. Put a small basket or bowl in front of the cross. You may select another symbol and choose to enthrone a Bible. Have small note cards and pens available. Use this or another centerpiece that symbolizes a change of heart as we allow God to come into our lives in a deeper and new way during this Season.

BECOME ACQUAINTED

Go around the group with each person sharing his or her hopes for the meeting.

GATHER TOGETHER IN THE PRESENCE OF CHRIST

Leader: As we gather together, we recall how God has come into our lives this past week and how God is present in our midst now.

After a moment of silence, ask the Holy Spirit to empower you and the group:

*Come Holy Spirit,
Fill the hearts of all people with the fire of Your Love.
May all accept Your invitation to know and love Jesus as Lord and Savior.*

*Fill this Archdiocese with people who welcome
and invite others to share in the Catholic faith.
Fill our Cardinal, our bishops and priests, deacons and lay ministers
with wisdom and courage to live and
preach the Gospel of Jesus Christ.
Fill all parish and agency staff with Your power to
evangelize those whom they serve.*

*Fill all consecrated men and women and all lay people with the grace
to become and make disciples of Jesus through
prayer, work, and daily living.
May the holy fire of Your love transform our society according to the Gospel.*

*Come Holy Spirit! With the Father and the Son,
You are worshiped and glorified forever and ever. Amen.*

EXTEND GOD'S INVITATION

On a notecard, write the name(s) of those whose lives may need the warmth of love during a cold winter of life, a new coming of God's Reign of love, peace, and justice. Place the cards in the bowl or basket.

REFLECT AND SHARE

For Lent 2006, the Gospel readings in Cycle B are from Mark and John. The Gospel accounts unite to give a unique perspective on Jesus' glory by His love for all. Reflect on each question below in turn or use your own questions. Allow group members, if they wish, to answer that question before the group moves on to the next question.

READ THE SCRIPTURES

Read the Sunday Scriptures out loud together. Afterward, mention which Scripture passage touched you and why. What does the passage mean to you in your own life at this stage of your personal spiritual journey?

1st Reading: Genesis 9:8-15
2nd Reading: 1 Peter 3:18-22
Gospel: Mark 1:12-15

Reflection on the Gospel Reading

In each Lectionary Cycle (A, B, C), the Gospel for the first Sunday of Lent focuses on Jesus' temptation in the desert. The account from Mark's Gospel is the shortest version and does not include the conversation between Jesus and Satan as found in Luke and Matthew. After Jesus' trial in the wilderness, He began His public ministry, proclaiming the gospel: change your life, believe in the Gospel.

Reflection Questions:

Believe: As I begin this Season of Lent, what wilderness of sin is God calling me to forsake?

Share: As I begin this Season of Lent, what new ways of proclaiming His Kingdom is God calling me to do?

Transform: As I begin this Season of Lent, what wilderness in society is the Spirit prompting me to help transform with the power of the Gospel?

PRAY FOR EACH OTHER

Pray together for any petitions and any needs that you might have. Stand in a circle together and say the Our Father. Pray daily this week for the person on your right.

LEAVE TO EVANGELIZE YOUR WORLD

Reflect on your mission to grow deeper in your relationship with God. Be welcoming, offer hospitality and work for transformation in your daily life. Suggestions for this coming week:

Believe: During prayer this week, examine which area of your life is a desert that needs new growth. Ask Jesus for personal transformation.

Share: Set a goal to share the Gospel in a new or special way this Lent. Determine whom you will approach and pray for the opening and inviting words to do so.

Transform: During the week, set a goal to do some work of social justice on a regular basis. Refer to the "Transform" Objective of the Personal Mandate in *Spreading the Holy Fire* to generate some ideas. Ask the Holy Spirit for guidance and power to get started.

READ THE SCRIPTURES

Read the Sunday Scriptures out loud together. Afterward, mention which Scripture passage touched you and why. What does the passage mean to you in your own life at this stage of your personal spiritual journey?

1st Reading: Genesis 22:1-2, 9a, 10-13, 15-18

2nd Reading: Romans 8:31b-34

Gospel: Mark 9:2-10

Reflection on the Gospel Reading

In each Lectionary Cycle (A, B, C), the Gospel from the Second Sunday of Lent tells the story of Jesus' transfiguration. Today's version from Mark's Gospel reveals the ultimate destiny of Jesus. Peter, James and John accompanied Jesus to a high mountain where he appeared in dazzling glory with Elijah and Moses. The disciples were terrified. They heard a voice from a cloud say, "This is my beloved son. Listen to him." Jesus told His disciples not to talk about their experience until after He had risen from the dead. Afterwards, the disciples questioned what rising from the dead meant.

Reflection Questions:

Believe: In what manner have I imagined or felt Jesus' dazzling appearance in my life?

Share: With whom have I shared my encounters with Jesus?

Transform: What would it mean for the world to "rise from the dead" with Jesus?

PRAY FOR EACH OTHER

Pray together for any petitions and any needs that you might have. Stand in a circle together and say the Our Father. Pray daily this week for the person on your right.

LEAVE TO EVANGELIZE YOUR WORLD

Reflect on your mission to grow deeper in your relationship with God. Be welcoming, offer hospitality and work for transformation in your daily life. Suggestions for this coming week:

Believe: During the week, ask Jesus to take you to a quiet place and show you His dazzling glory. Listen to what He says.

Share: Visit someone in the valley of depression, despair or loneliness and share the light of Jesus through your personal presence and friendship.

Transform: Encounter someone experiencing hunger, thirst, poverty, lack of education and do a kind act to help them progress toward overcoming the problem.

READ THE SCRIPTURES

Read the Sunday Scriptures out loud together. Afterward, mention which Scripture passage touched you and why. What does the passage mean to you in your own life at this stage of your personal spiritual journey?

1st Reading: Exodus 20:1-17

2nd Reading: 1 Corinthians 1:22-25

Gospel: John 2:13-25

Reflection on the Gospel Reading

Today's reading from John exposes deep tension between different belief systems. Jesus visited the Temple where He found a marketplace instead of a place of worship. He expelled those conducting commerce. Confronted by Jewish leaders questioning His authority, Jesus indicated that He would destroy the temple, raising it up in three days. Jesus spoke figuratively about His own body; the Jewish leaders thought He meant the actual building. The Gospel concludes with the tension of those beginning to believe in Jesus and Jesus' knowledge of human nature.

Reflection Questions:

Believe: *What areas of confusion or misunderstanding does Jesus need to drive out of my life?*

Share: *As I look ahead toward Easter, what does it mean to share the news of Jesus' resurrection with others?*

Transform: *How does today's Gospel impact the role of human nature in commerce to bring about a more just marketplace?*

PRAY FOR EACH OTHER

Pray together for any petitions and any needs that you might have. Stand in a circle together and say the Our Father. Pray daily this week for the person on your right.

LEAVE TO EVANGELIZE YOUR WORLD

Reflect on your mission to grow deeper in your relationship with God. Be welcoming, offer hospitality and work for transformation in your daily life. Suggestions for this coming week:

Believe: *During prayer, imagine being a money changer in the Temple and hearing the news of Jesus' prediction of His resurrection. Talk with Jesus about your feelings.*

Share: *Sponsor or contribute to a collection for the needy in your community and then personally deliver it.*

Transform: *Examine your current financial stewardship regarding investment choices, spending, donation, and saving decisions. See where they oppose Gospel and Catholic values and make changes where needed.*

READ THE SCRIPTURES

Read the Sunday Scriptures out loud together. Afterward, mention which Scripture passage touched you and why. What does the passage mean to you in your own life at this stage of your personal spiritual journey?

1st Reading: 2 Chronicles 36:14-16, 19-23

2nd Reading: Ephesians 2:4-10

Gospel: John 3:14-21

Reflection on the Gospel Reading

Today's reading from the Gospel of John captures part of a conversation between Jesus and Nicodemus, a leader of the Jewish people. Jesus stated His mission to reveal God's saving love: "God so loved the world that he give his only Son" - not to perish but to have the gift of eternal life. Receiving God's gift required the choice to believe in God's Son, the light of the world. That choice would separate those who elect to remain in darkness from those who live in truth.

Reflection Questions:

Believe: What do I profess about Jesus?

Share: How did I share this profession this past week?

Transform: How does love transform the world?

PRAY FOR EACH OTHER

Pray together for any petitions and any needs that you might have. Stand in a circle together and say the Our Father. Pray daily this week for the person on your right.

LEAVE TO EVANGELIZE YOUR WORLD

Reflect on your mission to grow deeper in your relationship with God. Be welcoming, offer hospitality and work for transformation in your daily life. Suggestions for this coming week:

Believe: Celebrate the Sacrament of Reconciliation this week. Confess and turn away from a sinful practice and focus on living justly.

Share: Visit a non-Catholic Christian church, a synagogue or a mosque this week. Participate in praising and worshipping God with those present.

Transform: Do an act of loving kindness this week for someone you have never met.

READ THE SCRIPTURES

Read the Sunday Scriptures out loud together. Afterward, mention which Scripture passage touched you and why. What does the passage mean to you in your own life at this stage of your personal spiritual journey?

1st Reading: Jeremiah 31:31-34

2nd Reading: Hebrews 5:7-9

Gospel: John 12:20-33

Reflection on the Gospel Reading

This week's passage from the Gospel of John begins with a dynamic interaction between various people and Jesus. Foreigners (some Greeks) wanted to see Jesus and approached Phillip. Phillip found Andrew and they both told Jesus. The chain of events prompted Jesus to begin a discourse on what glory means - dying to oneself, serving Jesus by following Him, and how His death would draw everyone to Him.

Reflection Questions:

Believe: In my life, who has been instrumental in leading me to Jesus when I wanted to see Him?

Share: What do I do when others approach me and ask to see Jesus?

Transform: How do I envision what the world would be like when everyone is drawn to Jesus?

PRAY FOR EACH OTHER

Pray together for any petitions and any needs that you might have. Stand in a circle together and say the Our Father. Pray daily this week for the person on your right.

LEAVE TO EVANGELIZE YOUR WORLD

Reflect on your mission to grow deeper in your relationship with God. Be welcoming, offer hospitality and work for transformation in your daily life. Suggestions for this coming week:

Believe: Pray before a cross this week and reflect on how Jesus' life and death have drawn you to Him.

Share: Be like Phillip or Andrew this week. Be open to show Jesus to strangers or newcomers in your parish, neighborhood or workplace.

Transform: Carry a small cross in your pocket, wallet or purse this week. Reflect on Jesus' love for others and allow that love to inspire you to take just action to serve others this week.

READ THE SCRIPTURES

Read the Sunday Scriptures out loud together. Afterward, mention which Scripture passage touched you and why. What does the passage mean to you in your own life at this stage of your personal spiritual journey?

1st Reading: Isaiah 50:4-7
2nd Reading: Phillipians 2:6-11
Gospel: Mark 14:1-15:47

Reflection on the Gospel Reading

This Sunday's Passion from Mark's Gospel is the shortest of all the Passion narratives. It is filled with stark details and an urgent pace that presses on to Jesus' death on the cross. The Centurion standing guard at the foot of the cross confessed his belief in Jesus as Son of God. The passage ends with the burial of Jesus in the tomb.

Reflection Questions:

- Believe:* As the Season of Lent closes, how has my faith grown to profess Jesus as "Truly, this is the Son of God"?
- Share:* As the Season of Lent closes, how have I shared my faith with others in a deeper or new way that I didn't expect to do when Lent began?
- Transform:* As the Season of Lent closes, how has my life and the lives of those I have encountered this Lent, experienced a deeper transformation?

PRAY FOR EACH OTHER

Pray together for any petitions and any needs that you might have. Stand in a circle together and say the Our Father. Pray daily this week for the person on your right.

LEAVE TO EVANGELIZE YOUR WORLD

Reflect on your mission to grow deeper in your relationship with God. Be welcoming, offer hospitality and work for transformation in your daily life. Suggestions for this coming week:

- Believe:* As Holy Week unfolds, focus on the love of Jesus for you and participate in the Triduum (Holy Thursday, Good Friday, Easter Vigil services) as much as possible.
- Share:* As Holy Week unfolds, follow the Spirit's promptings to reach out to an inactive Catholic(s) and invite him/her/them to participate in the Triduum with you.
- Transform:* As Holy Week unfolds, pray for a new Easter in our society and world. Follow the Spirit's voice to take specific action to bring about greater peace, love and reconciliation.

Afterword

Renewal of Baptismal Vows/ Profession of Faith

I reject sin so as to live in the freedom of God's children.

I reject the glamour of evil and refuse to be mastered by sin.

I reject Satan, father of sin and prince of darkness.

I believe in God, the Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, His Only Son, our Lord, who was born of the Virgin Mary, was crucified, died and was buried, rose from the dead and is now seated with the Father.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the dead and life everlasting.

Comments are Welcome

Thank you for participating in these small faith-sharing group sessions, reflecting on Scripture in the light of evangelization. By virtue of baptism, everyone is called to evangelize. If you are interested in working in evangelization in a greater way, ask your pastor about joining a Parish Evangelization Team or participating in an outreach ministry at your parish.

The Office for Evangelization would appreciate your comments, experiences, thoughts and ideas on what you or your group has learned through the small-faith sharing process. You may write, call, fax or e-mail comments to:

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About the Author

Dave Pipitone is an active Roman Catholic who is husband to Cheryl and father to Emily. He has participated in and led small-faith sharing groups, authored faith-sharing materials for the Archdiocese of Chicago, wrote the reflection questions for *Spreading the Holy Fire: A Plan for Catholics Evangelizing in the Archdiocese of Chicago* and has contributed to *Disciples in Prayer* (Oregon Catholic Press.) Dave serves as an ad hoc member of the Advisory Committee for the Office for Evangelization of the Archdiocese. He is a 2003 graduate of the Chicago Catholic Scripture School offered through the Office of Catechesis of the Archdiocese of Chicago.

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THE PERSONAL MANDATE:

Becoming a Disciple

PERSONAL OBJECTIVE ONE: COMMITMENT

Each Catholic will recommit her/himself to Jesus Christ as a disciple by embracing evangelization as their personal mission.

Strategies

- Accept God's invitation to personal conversion, to know and love Jesus as Lord and Savior.
- Pray daily for the grace and power of the Holy Spirit to be more of a disciple of Jesus Christ by growing in faith, hope, and love.
- Pray daily for the spread of the Gospel and for all of the disciples of Jesus, especially the Church's official ministers and our Cardinal Archbishop.
- Develop a mindset of "being sent" to share the Good News with everyone.
- Write a personal mission statement in light of evangelization and discipleship.
- Renew your Baptismal Promises on a regular basis (daily if possible) as a sign of your commitment to discipleship and evangelization.
- Take a personal inventory on a regular basis (daily) by examining your conscience, your intentions, and your actions.
- Create a daily plan to evangelize by being "intentional" in what you say and do.
- Witness to the Gospel and to Jesus Christ by living as a faithful, practicing Catholic.
- Support the Church by exercising Gospel stewardship of personal time, talent, and treasure.

Visible Signs

- Individual Catholics have a sense of personal mission and of "being sent."
- Individual Catholics are volunteering for church programs, ministries, and outreach.
- The witness of individual Catholics is noticed at home, in the parish, and in the neighborhood.

PERSONAL OBJECTIVE TWO: BELIEVE

Each Catholic will respond to God's grace to grow in personal holiness by deepening his/her personal relationship with Jesus and His Church.

Strategies

- Actively participate in the Sunday Eucharist on a regular basis.
- Try to share in the Eucharist more often than Sunday.
- Cultivate a daily practice of personal prayer and conversation with God.
- Actively celebrate the Sacrament of Reconciliation as a part of your spiritual life.
- Encourage family members to participate in celebrating the Sacramental Life of the Church, especially the sacraments of the Eucharist and Reconciliation.
- Develop a deeper appreciation for the Sacred Scriptures by reading and reflecting upon them on a regular basis, especially the readings of the liturgical day.

PART
THREE

- Participate in faith-sharing prayer and other spiritual formation events like retreats, parish missions, days of reflection, and the like.
- Join in a small faith-sharing group or small Christian community to share prayer, faith, and Scripture.
- Study and reflect upon the rich heritage and teachings of the Catholic Church as expressed in the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* or other such documents and share them with others.
- Develop a daily, personal spiritual regimen; e.g., morning and evening prayers, prayer before meals, examination of conscience, Scripture reading, personal devotions, Mass, etc.

Visible Signs

- Catholics actively and regularly participate in the celebration of the sacramental life of the Church, especially the Holy Eucharist.
- Individual Catholics are enthusiastic about being Catholic.
- Individual Catholics are alive with an informed faith, a vibrant hope for the coming of God's Reign, and a joyful love of God. God's presence is experienced and witnessed.

PERSONAL OBJECTIVE THREE: SHARE

Each Catholic will reach out to share the Good News of Jesus Christ with everyone and especially newcomers, inactive Catholics, the marginalized, and the unchurched.

Strategies

- Become a sharing person who freely witnesses to the Catholic Faith and recount personal experiences openly with others.
- Invite a new parishioner, neighbor, or friend to dinner or a social event to build a friendship based on Christ's love.
- Visit a new parishioner or neighbor in his or her home to build community and communion.
- Become a minister of care and bring Holy Communion to the homebound and hospitalized.
- Practice hospitality in the parish, in the neighborhood, in the workplace by listening, encouraging, affirming, and celebrating others.
- Develop a welcoming atmosphere at home by being present for family meals and other family celebrations and special occasions.
- Celebrate the diversity and faith of people from different ethnic and cultural backgrounds by sharing stories and entering into conversation and dialogue. (Resources: The pastoral letter of Francis Cardinal George *Dwell in My Love* (April 2001) and the U.S. Catholic Bishops' statement entitled *Welcoming the Stranger Among Us: Unity in Diversity*)

- Reach out and welcome Catholics who have become inactive in the practice of their faith by listening to their stories and inviting them, when ready, to return to active participation in the Church. (Resource: *A Time to Listen...A Time to Heal: A Resource Directory for Reaching Out to Inactive Catholics*, U.S. Catholic Bishops Handbook, November 1998)
- Know the outreach ministries of the parish and invite fellow parishioners, friends and family members to enroll in outreach sessions.
- Witness the Gospel to the unchurched and to those who have never heard of Christ and His Church by word and deed so that they may come to know of God's love for them.

Visible Signs

- Inactive Catholics are being invited to return to the practice of their faith.
- Individual Catholics express a joyful spirit of hospitality.
- Individual Catholics live out the paradigm shift of the Second Vatican Council by being focused on outreach to all and not just to practicing Catholics.



PERSONAL OBJECTIVE FOUR: TRANSFORM

Each Catholic will participate in the transformation of society and culture by living and proclaiming the Gospel of Life.

Strategies

- Develop a deeper gratitude and practice of sacrificial love in families to mirror the love of Christ and strengthen the domestic church. (Resource: *Follow the Way of Love: A Pastoral Message of the U.S. Catholic Bishops to Families*)
- Seek out opportunities to witness to Christ through social programs and church-sponsored outreach ministries. (Resources: *Everyday Christianity: To Hunger and Thirst for Justice* and *In All Things Charity: A Pastoral Challenge for the New Millennium*, U.S. Catholic Bishops)
- Exercise political rights in accord with Gospel and Catholic values by voting, campaigning, and becoming involved in the political process to shape a political environment based on Gospel values of respect for the dignity of the human person. (Resources: *Living the Gospel of Life: A Challenge to America's Catholics and Faithful Citizenship* by the U.S. Catholic Bishops)
- Discern and practice the wise use of those contemporary media which affirm human life and Gospel values, including reading materials and viewing programs that are in accord with Catholic values and beliefs. (Resources: *Family Guide for Using the Media, Your Family and Cyberspace*, *Civility in Media*, *Renewing the Mind of the Media*, *Family Guide for Using the Media*, U.S. Catholic Bishops)
- Develop an appreciation of the arts and their messages in order to hear the signs of the times and discern the Holy Spirit's voice calling for transformation.
- Develop and practice a spirituality of work so that all employers and employees are transformed by just labor relationships.
- Practice faith by witnessing to the Gospel in all areas of your daily life including family, neighborhood, workplace, politics, the arts, the sciences, media, and other areas.
- Work in your neighborhood, parish, and home to foster cultural diversity and racial justice.
- Be involved in parish and local service groups in your neighborhood which serve the needs of the neighborhood.
- Study and reflect upon the social teachings of the Church.

Visible Signs

- Individual Catholics are involved in putting into practice the social teachings of the Church.
- Persons are transformed in their personal lives as they are affected by the power of the Gospel.
- People everywhere recognize the transforming presence of Jesus in the workplace, neighborhood, parish, and home in the quality of human relationships.

1. *Of what importance is the Personal Mandate?*

To whom does it apply?

2. *Where and how do individuals achieve the strategies to commit, believe, share, and transform society? What resources do they need?*

3. *What visible signs appeal the most to you? Why?*

REFLECTION QUESTIONS