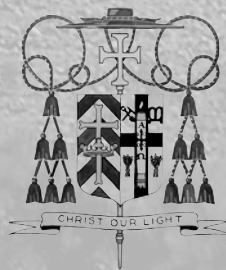


Legendary Lodge

“Ultimately the only way I can be myself is to become identified with Him in whom is hidden the reason and fulfillment of my existence.”

- Thomas Merton



Summer 2011
Session Guide



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Overview

Real, authentic Christian character is formed by our commitment to Christ. Our spiritual discipline, motives, obedience, and persevering faith will be the keys! This summer at Legendary Lodge all of our catechetical sessions will focus on the development of Christian character with an in-depth look at the virtues and vices of the Catholic Christian life. In addition to daily Mass and youth-led prayer experiences, the counselors will be intentionally focused on the teaching of Christian virtue. The sessions always include plenty of activity, small group interaction and outdoor elements. This guide seeks to provide a basic foundation of information for session planning. It is by no means exhaustive. Throughout the summer, the contents of this guide will most certainly evolve. Most importantly, the Office of Catholic Formation Services wants you to have a better understanding of the “goings on” at Legendary Lodge. If you are a parent, use the discussion questions at the end of the session pages to initiate conversation with your child after their week at Legendary Lodge. If you are a pastor or youth minister, please integrate some of the data from the sessions into your youth ministry programming throughout the year. Legendary Lodge is part of a whole year of dynamic faith formation in the Diocese of Helena. Keeping the experience connected to parish life is a priority.

Legendary Lodge Summer 2011 Session Guide was arranged by:

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About Virtue

Virtue refers to moral strength regardless of sex; it has to do with inner character, the capacity to live what you say you believe. Virtuous persons are strong, not necessarily in a physical sense but in the sense that they are able to act in a virtuous manner in the face of determined opposition, persecution, or - even more difficult - living in a culture frequently characterized by radical moral relativism, even indifference to right or wrong, good or evil.

The Catholic virtues are ways to live a life of moral excellence and goodness according to standards set by the Gospel of Jesus and the living tradition of the Catholic Church. According to traditional Catholic teaching, there are two kinds of virtues. First, there are the “theological virtues,” which pertain to our relationship with God. Second, there are the “cardinal virtues,” from the Latin, which means “hinge” - because these virtues are of foremost importance, which is actually the first dictionary meaning of the term cardinal. Everything “hinges” on these virtues in the sense that all other virtues, except the theological virtues, in some way derive from these.

What, then, is a virtue? We may define a virtue as “a way of behaving that makes people and their actions good.” To act in a virtuous manner is to fulfill the true purpose of our life. In this sense, to be virtuous is to cultivate and nourish our true self, our deepest self that is destined for eternal union with God, now and in the life to come.

Thomas Merton, the great twentieth-century American Trappist monk and author wrote:

Ultimately the only way I can be myself is to become identified with Him in whom is hidden the reason and fulfillment of my existence. Therefore there is only one problem on which all my existence, my peace and my happiness depend: to discover myself in discovering God. If I find Him I will find myself and if I find my true self I will find Him.

Only by becoming identified with God can we become our own deepest and truest selves, and only if we find our true selves can we find God. The two go together, and the path to both is along the path of virtue. To cultivate the theological and cardinal virtues is to choose both our true selves and union with God, hence their vital importance in the Christian life.

Mitch Finley

The Catholic Virtues: Seven pillars of a good life



Session #1: Faith & Hope

"Faith is a fire, and it's fanned by the winds of thanks." - John Stewart (singer/songwriter)

Talking Points

Faith:

1. Our relationship with the risen Christ, who claims from each of his followers the complete surrender to him that the Hebrew people gave to the Lord God.
2. Authentic faith finds itself in both solitude and community; both are necessary and the two are related.
3. Ordinary people do not always see faith in themselves, but the good God lets others see it in them all the same.
4. Faith at its most basic is intimacy between "Godness" and humanness. Faith is loving intimacy between people and the Creator of the universe, and the Creator is wildly, madly, crazy in love with each of us.

Hope:

1. The story of Moses and the Exodus and Abraham are designed to inspire hope.
2. It enables us to live for the future without knowing what the future may bring.
3. While optimism believes that nothing but good is just around the corner, hope believes that life is worth living whatever is just around the corner.
4. Hope does not draw its life from visible signs. Rather, hope gets a grip based on faith - the heart's conviction that God is trustworthy even when there is no earthly evidence to support such a claim.
5. Hope is only true when it has no expectations, when it opens the heart wide to whatever may happen in the providence of God.
6. The virtue of hope survives and thrives when we know from experience that life is worth living only when we serve and care for others.

Faith:

"What people don't realize is what religion costs. They think faith is a big electric blanket, when of course it is a cross. It is much harder to believe than not to believe...Don't expect faith to clear things up for you. It is trust, not certainty."

-Flannery O'Connor

"...doubt isn't the opposite of faith; it is an element of faith...I can't prove the friendship of my friend. When I experience it, I don't need to prove it. When I don't experience it, no proof will do. If I tried to put his friendship to the test somehow, it would ruin the friendship I was testing. So it is with the Godness of God."

-Paul Tillich

Hope:

"We are not perfectly free until we live in pure hope. For when our hope is pure, it no longer trusts exclusively in human and visible means, nor rests in any visible end. He who hopes in God trusts God, whom he never sees, to bring him to the possession of things that are beyond imagination."

-Thomas Merton

Discussion Questions

1. Who are the people that have formed your faith?
2. Does your faith bring you to a closer personal relationship with God?
3. How do hope and faith interact?
4. What happens to a person when there is no hope?

Vices

SELF-DESTRUCTION
DESPAIR

Resources pg. 10

CCC  



Session #2: Love/Charity

"Love is the heartbeat of the whole universe." Dante Alighieri

Talking Points

Love:

1. Greek: agape, Latin: caritas
2. Love is not merely an emotion, thought or intention. Something happens.
3. We need to discuss God's love for us, our love for God, our love for one another, our love for God's creation, and a properly understood love for our own self.
4. In order for the virtue of love to be authentic it must be active in ways that help the one loved to feel loved.
5. Christian love (agape) is dedicated service to the good of the other, and "liking" often has nothing to do with it.
6. For most of us the greatest teacher of love is probably someone close to us, someone who day by day, show us the meaning of love.
7. Nothing can substitute for the realization that I am loved unconditionally by God and the only reason God needs to love me "is that he sees me."
8. There is no Christian way of life (inclusive of all vocations: marriage, religious, ordained single) that is not a life based on the virtue of love.
9. Love is shaped by the words of Jesus.
10. We need to allow God time to show his love for us, and we need to give time to loving God in return. Daily prayer is the key!
11. Above all things: John 15:12-13
12. It is in our everyday relationships with family, friends, and coworkers where we find ourselves called upon to both lay down our life for our friends and do good to those whose behavior irritates us.
13. Life has meaning only to the extent that we forget ourselves in order to love other.
14. There is no end to what love is, and there is no end to what love means.
Remember this, without giving and receiving love, our life is bound to be empty and without purpose.

Love/Charity:

Scriptural prayer: "My God and my all. Oh God, you are my God whom I seek. Love of God fill my heart."

"...to love is to will the good of the other."

- St. Thomas Aquinas

That God should love me is more wonderful than that I so imperfectly love him. My reason is mortality, and dim senses; His - oh, insupportable - is that he sees me. Even when I pull dark thoughts about my head, each vein and limb delights Him.

-Mark Van Doren
(Poem: He Loves Me)

"True happiness is found in unselfish love, a love which increases in proportion as it is shared."

-Thomas Merton

"Active love is a harsh and fearful thing compared with love in dreams. Love in dreams thirsts for immediate action, quickly performed, and with everyone watching. Indeed, it will go as far as the giving even of one's life, provided it does not take long but is soon over, as on stage, and everyone is looking on praising. Whereas active love is labor and perseverance."

-Fyodor Dostoevsky (Zossima)

Discussion Questions

1. Who embodies love in our lives?
2. How does Jesus teach us to love others? Ourselves?
3. How is love a verb in our lives?
4. In what ways can we express God's love for us, our love for God, and love for his creation?

Vices

HATE
INDIFFERENCE

Resources pg. 10

CCC  



Session #3: Prudence and Temperance

"The heart has its reasons which reason does not understand." - Blaise Pascal

Talking Points

Prudence:

1. Is best understood through an investigation of the Sermon on the Mount: Matt 5:3-12.
2. ...discerns our true good in every circumstance and strives to choose the right means of achieving it; "the prudent man looks where he is going" [Proverbs 14:15].
3. Prudence is just as likely to lead us to take a big risk as to avoid taking one. See Sermon on the Mount.
4. Prudence is the capacity for discernment, the ability to determine what we should do...and then do it.
5. It is about being open to the Holy Spirit active in our lives.
6. ...enables us to listen to input from other people, from various authorities, and from our own life experience. Then it helps us to weigh our options before making a choice.
7. Prudence leads us to think clearly and stay prayerfully in touch with the Spirit of God leading us in the truth.

Temperance:

1. Not about abstaining completely from anything. Rather, it helps us respond to all our appetites with moderation.
2. Is about disciplining our desires and moving them towards what is good for our relationships with God and others.
3. Temperance is the inner guide that leads us in the direction of selfless self-preservation.
4. Temperance = Moderation.
5. It is refrain from going to extremes, no matter what behavior is in question.
6. A person who allow their appetites to call the shots is no longer free.
7. It tell me to get some balance into my life: limit work find time for leisure, prayer, activity I enjoy, retreat, read, listen to music, etc.
8. It reminds us that we cannot share what we do not have.

Prudence:

"Prudence does not answer the question: 'What is the best way in principle to do the right thing?' Rather; 'What is the best way for me, in this situation (i.e., in the light of these relationships and responsibilities), to do the right thing?"

-Richard P. McBrien

"With the help of this virtue we apply moral principles to particular cases without error and overcome doubts about the good to achieve and the evil to avoid."

-CCC ¶ 1806

Temperance:

"Temperance is the inner guide that leads us in the direction of selfless self-preservation."

-George P. Evans

Discussion Questions

1. What are some practical ways we can make good decisions?
2. How does Jesus enter into this process?
3. What limits do we place on ourselves?
4. What are examples of ways we can lead more moderate lives?

Vices

RECKLESSNESS
EXCESSIVENESS

Resources pg. 10

CCC ¶ |



Session #4: Justice

"Let justice be done though the world perish." - St. Augustine

Talking Points

Justice:

1. Simply put...Justice gives to others what they are due or what they have a right to.
2. Two major scriptural references to justice are the story of Naboth (1 Kings 21:1-29 as well as David and Bathsheba (2 Samuel 11:1-23; 12:1-15). The stories show how someone with no worldly power (Elijah and Nathan) stood up for a victim of injustice and accused a king to his face of being responsible for that injustice.
3. The virtue of justice is both personal and social.
4. The best metaphor for justice is not a pie cut into equal parts so everyone gets an equal piece. It is the conviction that human life is sacred.
5. Justice respects the rights of every person, not merely because it is unfair to do otherwise, but that person is a sacred child of God, created by God, with a right to live a fully human life.
6. Once we admit the sacredness of human life as an end in itself, justice issues become self-evident.
7. Justice cultivates respect for the dignity of all persons, for the right of all to the resources they need, and for the privilege of all to be involved in decisions that shape their lives.
8. Through our union with God we are called to bring the spirit of justice into our lives and into our world in tangible ways.
9. Justice seeks stewardship. Stewardship = people extending themselves, helping make possible opportunities for others, enriching their lives and sensitivities by exercising their talents, resources, and energies.
10. Justice in the heart means being deeply convinced that other people are just as human as I am, children of God, just like me. Justice in the heart means tempering law with compassion and forgiveness.

Justice:

"As long as one is immersed in the sensory overload of TV and movies that preset endlessly unrelieved violence and killing as the unquestioned norm, human life is likely to be seen not only as cheap but worthless."

-James J. Mcgiveren

"In Catholic thought, social justice is not merely a secular or humanitarian matter. Social justice is a reflection of God's essential respect and concern for each person to achieve his or her destiny as a child of God (no. 8)."

-USCCB *To Do Justice* (1978)

"Justice is the moral virtue that consists in the constant and firm will to give their due to God and neighbor."

-CCC ¶ 1807

"Peace brings to full fruition the deepest qualities and potentials of the human person, the qualities which can change the world and make it better. It gives hope for a future of justice and peace, even in the face of grave injustice and material and moral poverty."

-Pope Benedict XVI

Discussion Questions

1. In what ways do I defend justice?
2. In what ways do I fail to embody both personal and social justice?
3. In what ways do I promote the sacredness of life?
4. What is the most difficult thing about standing up to what is right?

Vices

APATHY
TYRANNY

Resources pg. 10

CCC ¶ |



Session #5: Fortitude/Courage

"You gain strength, courage and confidence by every experience in which you really stop to look fear in the face." - Eleanor Roosevelt

Talking Points

Fortitude:

1. Great saint models: Maximilian Kolbe and Therese of Lisieux. Kolbe exemplified ultimate sacrifice and holiness. Therese sat the infinite value of each day and taught a spirituality based on the fortitude needed to act with love and faith in the utterly ordinary challenges and joys of everyday life.
2. Fortitude certainly includes courage but is much broader than that.
3. Fortitude means standing firm in hope against all pressures to despair, even in the face of death itself.
4. Matthew 10:28-31 provides an incredible charge to be courageous.
5. Fortitude is not just physical courage shown, it includes the spiritual and moral courage that makes it possible for us to put up with the disapproval of others in response to our efforts on behalf of social justice.
6. Fortitude gives us the strength to resist an inclination to run away from danger.
7. Fortitude can mean both endurance and attack. It means holding strongly to the good while, at the same time, refusing to give in to pain and/or fear as well as attacking evil and blocking its progress, by reasonable means.
8. Less dramatic examples = quiet dedication to love for neighbor when that love is not returned, as well as patience and persistence in prayer.
9. Fortitude enables us, with the grace of God, to choose and act on whatever is good, to choose what gives life, even in the face of anxiety, fear, threats of harm, and even death itself.
10. Fortitude comes, first and foremost, from rooting our heart in the Gospel so that our deepest beliefs govern our choices at all times!
11. No one should think that fortitude is limited to heroes in heroic situations.
12. Fortitude is the virtue that enables us to be faithful to our vows, promises, and commitments.
13. Fortitude is needed to be faithful to a daily discipline of prayer. The practice of daily prayer must be a discipline if it is to have a real impact on our life.

Fortitude/Courage:

"Fortitude may be defined as that quality of character through which its possessor is enabled to endure hardships and to overcome fears that would tend to deflect an individual from the pursuit of the aims of a humanly and Christian good life."

-Jean Porter

Living with God demands courage. When things go well, it is easy to assume God is with us. But when things go poorly, doubts arise. God never really abandons us, but we forget God's constant presence. and we pay the consequences of anxiety, confusion, distress - not because God wants this but because these are the natural results of turning away from God's truth, God's way, and God's life, all of which require courage."

-Peter Gilmour

"Growing spiritually can be like a roller coaster ride. Take comfort in the knowledge that the way down is only preparation for the way up. In the early stages of your spiritual journey, it may seem that Heaven is rejecting you and spurning all your efforts. Stay the course! Don't give up. In time, all barriers will disappear."

-Rebbe Nachman of Breslov

Discussion Questions

1. Who are models of fortitude in my life?
2. Do I have a daily prayer routine? How can I make it better?
3. What is an example in my own life of showing courage in both large and small ways?

Vices

FEAR
DESPAIR

Resources pg. 10





Resources

Session #1: Faith & Hope

Faith:

Hebrews 11:1, Matt 17:20, Mark 11:22-26, Romans 1:17, Ephesians 2:8-9
CCC ¶ 166, 158, 159, 162, 150, 163, 1814, 1253, and many more.

Hope:

Romans 8:22-25, Psalm 119:115, Psalm 39:7, Romans 15:4, Proverbs 13:12
CCC ¶ 1820, 2657, 64, 1843, 2086 and many more

Session #2: Love/Charity

Isaiah 54:5-8, Deut. 6:4-5, 1 Corinthians 13:13, Luke 6:27-29
CCC ¶ 219, 2196, 1604, 2658, 2094, 220, and many more.

Session #3: Prudence and Temperance

Prudence:

Proverbs 18:5, 13:16, 14:15, Matt 25:1-12
CCC ¶ 1806, 1834, 2088, 1788, 1906, 2109 and many more.

Temperance:

Proverbs 23:1, Daniel 1:8, Romans 13:14, 1 Cor 9:25
CCC ¶ 1809, 1838, 2290, 2521, 2341, 2407 and many more.

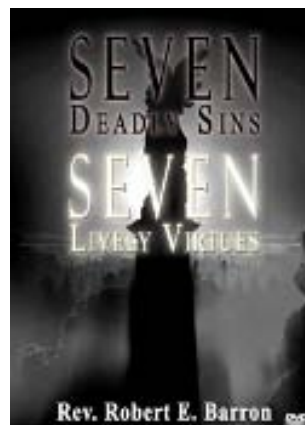
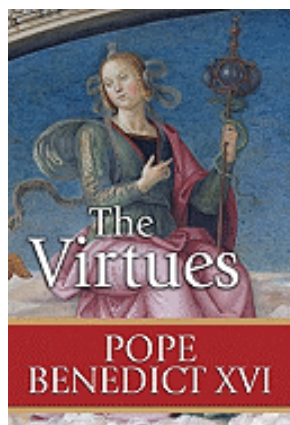
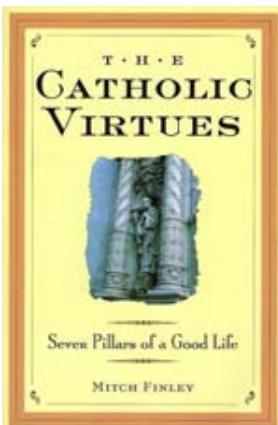
Session #4 - Justice

Isaiah 30:18, Genesis 18:25, Psalm 9:4, Jeremiah 23:5
CCC ¶ 1807, 1928, 1943, 2487, 379 and many more.

Session #5 - Fortitude/Courage

Exodus 15:2, 1 Sam 17:32-37, 2 Sam 7:27-29, Psalm 27:13-14, Matt 14:25-27, John 16:32-33, 1 Cor 1:25-27
CCC ¶ 1808, 1837, 1845, 2473, 1809 and many more.

Other





Acknowledgements

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- A special thanks to the Youth Ministry Advisory Council of the Diocese of Helena for collaborating with open hearts.
- All youth ministry efforts in the Diocese of Helena would not be possible if it weren't for the giving people of God and the leadership of Bishop George Leo Thomas.

For more information on youth ministry opportunities in the Diocese of Helena, please visit www.dohyouth.org. For photo albums and more from Legendary Lodge, please visit www.legendarylodge.com.





"To all of you, dear young people, who hunger and thirst for truth, the Church offers herself as a traveling companion. She offers the eternal Gospel message and entrusts you with an exalting apostolic task: to be the protagonists of the new evangelization."

- Blessed Pope John Paul II

CYC Board

- August 26-28, 2011
Mtg. #1 Legendary Lodge
- October 8-9, 2011
Mtg. #2 East Helena
- December 9-11, 2011
Mtg. #3 Lakeside
- March 30 - April 1, 2012
Mtg. #4 Butte

CYC Fall Conference

October 8, 2011
Helena

CYC Junior High Rally

November 5, 2011
Kalispell

Nat. Catholic Youth Convention

November 16-20, 2011
Indianapolis, IN

CYC Convention

April 20-22, 2012
Helena

CYC Kickball Tournament

May 20, 2012
Deer Lodge

CYC Leadership Camp

June 10-15, 2012
Legendary Lodge

Justice Outreach Project

June 24-29, 2012
Browning

Creation Northwest

To Be Announced
Enumclaw, WA



Office of Youth and Young Adult Ministry Events Calendar

Register for all events online at www.dohyouth.org

Legendary Lodge is an...

