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GENERAL INFORMATION

About Walking Toward Eternity

Walking Toward Eternity is a Catholic adult faith formation program that seeks to help people hear God's Word to them in the prayerful reading of Scripture and to apply it, one step at a time, to real situations.

Each eight-part study program focuses on a related group of topics that are essential for living out the Christian life. The lessons involve home study and meditation on Scripture using *lectio divina*, small-group discussion of the truths that were learned, an informative and inspiring DVD presentation, and a time of prayer and commitment to change, preferably before the Blessed Sacrament. This follow-up to *The Great Adventure* Bible study program helps to turn "head knowledge" into "heart knowledge." It challenges people to begin to "live in the story" by meditating on Scripture and applying it to their lives.

Series Two: Engaging the Struggles of Your Heart

Session One: Living on Purpose

Session Two: Engaging Your Appetites

Session Three: Engaging Your Shame

Session Four: Engaging Your Envy

Session Five: Engaging Your Anger

Session Six: Engaging Your Fear

Session Seven: Engaging Your Loneliness

Session Eight: Engaging Your Hopelessness

The primary goal of *Walking Toward Eternity* is to help people hear the voice of God through the prayerful reading of Scripture. Each session provides multiple opportunities to achieve this with Journal exercises as well as group and private prayer.

Your study's Core Team can contribute to the effectiveness of the small group and private prayer times by doing three simple things:

- Make prayer the foundation of your planning.
- Make time to prepare facilitators to lead the small groups.
- Make sure there is a quiet, reverent setting for the closing prayer time, preferably before the Blessed Sacrament.

The closing time of prayer, as brief as it is, can be a powerful first step as people “walk toward eternity.”

Program Elements

Home Preparation

For four days each week, the *Walking Toward Eternity* Journal guides participants in ten to fifteen minutes a day of prayerful reading and reflection on Scripture passages related to the topic at hand. In Series Two: *Engaging the Struggles of Your Heart*, each topic addresses an internal struggle each of us face along the road to eternal life. The questions help participants understand the struggle and engage it in their hearts and minds, turning hurts and failures over to God, and following his loving instruction.

Each day begins on a new, dated page in the Journal as shown here. Over the course of the week, participants are drawn more into the practice of *lectio divina* as they are encouraged to listen for the voice of God in Scripture.

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Engaging the Struggles of Your Heart

DAY 1

Date _____

The Problem of Uncontrolled Appetites

An appetite is a natural desire to satisfy a need. When our appetites are not controlled, they lead to things like greed; lust; overindulgence in food, drink, or things—often in an attempt to find wholeness, identity, and purpose.

Pray before you begin. Ask the Lord to help you understand why created things have such a pull on us.

1. Looking at our country and at your neighbors, what evidence of excess have you observed?
2. In your experience, how do material possessions and temporal gratification correspond to happiness?
3. Discover what the Bible has to say about the problem of uncontrolled appetites. Read the following verses aloud. Read each one again slowly. Repeat it in your mind and think about what it says. After each verse, write down the words, phrases, or concepts that stand out most to you.
 - a. Luke 12:15
 - b. Genesis 3:6
 - c. Exodus 20:17
 - d. Proverbs 23:2-5
 - e. Ezekiel 16:49

Class Time (allow two hours)

- Group Discussion (45 minutes)

After the introductory class, each session starts with a small-group discussion. Facilitators lead participants through a brief meditation on Scripture before guiding them through a discussion of the topic at hand.

- DVD Presentation (approximately 50 minutes)

A talk by Jeff Cavins reinforces the lesson, suggests practical steps for personal growth, and challenges participants to take one step toward change in the following week.

- Silent Prayer (10 to 15 minutes)

A short time of quiet (preferably before the Blessed Sacrament) is observed after the presentation to allow time for people to listen to the Word spoken into their own life, to hear how Christ is asking them to change in that area, and to plan their next step.

Materials

- *Walking Toward Eternity* Series Two Leader's Guide and a copy of the Group Facilitation Guidelines PDF, downloaded from WalkingTowardEternity.com
- Series Two: *Engaging the Struggles of Your Heart* DVD Set (eight, 50-minute sessions on four DVDs; CDs are also available)
- Journal (one per participant; includes *Walking Toward Eternity* Bookmark with instructions for *lectio divina*)
- Optional: extra DVD or CD set for lending library
- Bible (one per participant; a Catholic version is recommended)

Session Overviews

Session One

Session One begins with a DVD introduction to *Walking Toward Eternity*, followed by an explanation of the home preparation and group discussion parts of the study.

Agenda:

- Registration/Materials
- Welcome (5 to 10 minutes)
- DVD Presentation (approximately 50 minutes)
- Small-Group Orientation (30 to 40 minutes)
- Close (5 minutes)

Sessions Two Through Eight

The tone of Sessions two through eight is first set by a brief group meditation on a Scripture passage pertinent to the topic. Each of these class sessions continues with a small-group discussion of a particular topic based on the lesson the members have completed. The groups then gather together for a DVD presentation, and the class closes with prayer—if possible, before the Blessed Sacrament.

Agenda:

- Welcome (5 to 10 minutes)
- Small-Group Discussion (30 to 40 minutes)
- DVD Presentation (about 50 minutes)
- Silent Prayer (10 to 15 minutes)