



Leisure

■ Before you begin this handout:

1. Pray the opening prayer.
2. Discuss resolutions from last week, successes and struggles.
3. Watch Video for Leisure

What is leisure? Why are we including leisure with the tenets of Lent?

In our current world, being useful is valued above all else. We determine our own worth by how useful we are, how much money we make, our importance in projects at work or church or volunteering. We feel guilty if we leave work on-time because we “should” put in 110% to maintain our value to our employer. We schedule activities for our family and children in all hours out of school and work so that the only “downtime” we see is when we sleep.

- How much time do you spend in leisure?
- What does it mean to leisure?

But we have confused common utility with the common good. Common utility is the sum of all that contributes to material wealth in the world. It is not bad or evil, but it is only one part of the common good. Common good includes the arts, morality, justice, love and faith. It is all of these things that make us fully human.

- Are we spending enough time enjoying the people God has given us?

Recall the story of Martha and Mary. Martha was rushing about doing all of the things necessary for having a visitor and preparing a meal. And there is nothing wrong with doing these things. However, when seeing her sister Mary sitting at Jesus’ feet and listening (not working), she became discontent. Jesus did not admonish her for doing the work. His admonishment focused on her discontent at what Mary was doing and in not recognizing the worth of Mary listening to Jesus.

- Describe a time when you let the worry of “getting things done” get in the way of leisure or family time? How did that affect your relationships or feelings of self-worth?
- Have you ever been jealous of someone because they seem to have so much free time? How do you deal with that envy? How has that guided your actions or reactions to that person?

Some people may be able to, in spite of how hard they work, are able to be at peace outside of work and remain open to God in their lives. These people are able to respond to anything without spiritual struggle. But most of us aren’t like this. And so our work becomes dull and boring and we only vacation or relax to renew ourselves to go back to work. This is not true leisure. Leisure is being able to live in the moment, be open to God, finding a grateful heart, and it manifests in a sense of family and friendship. Leisure is being connected to God and to others in this world, not for their usefulness, but just for who they are. It is a sense of being, and not doing.

RESOLUTION: Each week we encourage all small group members to make a resolution related to the topic. For leisure, think about how you relax, truly relax! Discuss your resolution for this week. Some ideas:

- Next week is Holy Week. How can you rest in His Word and connect with Jesus in his Passion, Death and Resurrection?
- Watch a movie/listen to music about Jesus (even with your family/children) so you can deepen your love of Christ this week.
- Unplug from devices and spend time outside in God’s creation.
- Talk with family who lives elsewhere and connect with them and their lives.

CLOSING PRAYER:

Come Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of your faithful and kindle in them the fire of your love. Send forth your Spirit and they shall be created. And You shall renew the face of the earth.

O, God, who by the light of the Holy Spirit, did instruct the hearts of the faithful, grant that by the same Holy Spirit we may be truly wise and ever enjoy His consolations, Through Christ Our Lord, Amen