



A Study Program

the
Beatitudes
7
**Rooted in Gospel
Values**

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*Come, kindle In our hearts,
the fire of your Love.*



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HOW TO USE THIS STUDY PROGRAM

(It is recommended that each member of the group have her own copy of *the Beatitudes* to use during the study session)

When two or more Christians share their faith, we can be assured that Christ is in our midst and that the Holy Spirit is at work leading us, guiding us, inspiring us in a deeper understanding of our faith.

This program is designed to foster spiritual growth among members by group sharing. For this program to be effective, you are encouraged to follow the guidelines listed below.

1. Each person in the group should be given the opportunity to share. The sharing is done at the level at which each person feels comfortable.
2. Each person, during the time of sharing, is given the opportunity to express feelings and thoughts as have been experienced in their life-long faith journey.
3. The leader of the group should be ready to listen closely to the person who is speaking, making sure that each person in the group gets an opportunity to share. The leader should make an honest effort not only to listen but to understand what the person really is trying to say. A sense of humour is always helpful but be sure to use it at the right time.
4. The leader must ask questions only when necessary to keep the discussion in focus and then do her sharing last. The leader should not attempt to problem-solve.
5. The group is encouraged to share a second time only after the entire group has shared once.
6. Silence is very important in this group setting in order to respect each person in the group. In silence, one is able to reflect and meditate on the readings, maintaining the focus on the Beatitude studied.

7. Confidentiality is very important in the sharing process. When confidentiality is honoured, each person will feel free to share honestly.
8. Determine what action will be taken as a group effort or individually to live the meaning of the Beatitude until the next Beatitude is studied.
9. At the next study session, share the action plan that was taken. As we know, lip service is not good enough - we must be ready to witness by putting our words into action.

*"Where two or three gather
in my name,
there am I in their midst"*

BEATITUDE #7

"... Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God." **Mt** 5:9

OPENING PRAYER: I pray for the gift of inner peace, a peace that bears the fruit of goodwill and reconciliation, a peace that brings harmony to the community of all peoples.

1. FOCUS

I have come to the place where I really work at keeping the channels of communication open between me and those around me. I deal with anger and disagreements immediately and don't allow them to fester. I encourage those around me to work out their differences without hurting one another.

2. GIFT BASED ON THE BEATITUDE

Peacemaking - The ability to harmonize differences between others without causing either person to "lose."

3. SHARING EXPERIENCES

It is one thing to possess inner peace and to rejoice in that possession. It is a much greater challenge to strive to make peace possible for others. This Beatitude does not highlight the inner attitudes of the disciple, but the way a Christian should relate to others. There is no excuse for not being an active peacemaker. Our very existence depends on it.

4. SCRIPTURE READING-1 THESSALONIANS 5:12-15

5. REFLECTION ON THE SCRIPTURE READING

Paul gives the Thessalonians some practical instructions for keeping and making peace among themselves. To be a peacemaker is to run the risk of being rejected. It takes courage and humility to bring about reconciliation with

someone who has harmed you. It takes even greater fortitude to try to make peace in the lives of people who are hostile to their family or neighbours. Being called to be the peacemaker does not allow us to look the other way and not get involved.

6. QUESTIONS AND GROUP SHARING

- a. How do I respond when a neighbour offends me?
- b. What are some risks that I have taken in my life? What have I lost and what have I gained because of the risk?
- c. What concrete risk is the Lord asking me to take at this time to bring peace in a situation?

7. CONCLUSION

Being a peacemaker involves tact and sincerity. It means breaking down alienation and creating new ways for people to think about each other and to relate to one another.

To be a peacemaker is very much in line with the mission of Christ. He was announced by the prophet Isaiah as the "Prince of Peace" and at birth the angels sang, "Glory to God and peace to His people." Christ does not merely bring glory to God and peace to His people; He is it. He is the peace between us.

CLOSING PRAYER AND SONG

WOMEN - ROOTED IN GOSPEL VALUES MARGUERITE BOURGEOYS

"... Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God." Mt. 5:9



ABOUT Marguerite Bourgeoys

Marguerite Bourgeoys was born in the town of Troyes, France, on April 17, 1620. Marguerite knew God was calling her to a special vocation, but she did not know what He was calling her to until, one day, she received a personal invitation from de Maisonneuve to come to Canada. When the decision was reached that she would go to Canada, Marguerite felt at peace.

In the autumn of 1653, she made her way across the Atlantic to Canada to settle in Ville Marie, now the city of Montreal. Her task was to develop educational opportunities for the aboriginal children and the families of the French settlers. She began an order of sisters called the Congregation of Notre Dame.

While providing formal instruction, first in Ville Marie and later in the schools throughout the colony, Marguerite and her companions introduced vocational courses for young adolescents, gave assistance to those preparing for marriage, and willingly participated in assisting in whatever was planned to promote the well-being of everyone. It soon became clear that she had to work with many different groups of people - missionaries, pastors, church wardens, coordinators of one category or another, with the parish and civic communities, heads of families - not to mention those who were shouldering burdensome responsibilities in the highest ecclesiastical and governmental offices in the land. Contact with officials, whether such persons were in Montreal, Quebec or Paris, was sustained as a matter of necessity, since the general well-being of the people depended in no small degree on the good will of the governing groups. She came to know the colonists very well and they were perfectly at home with her.

Their problems were her problems and her purposes corresponded to their needs.

Marguerite used to say that in community, everyone is expected to move uncomplainingly from one task to another as circumstances demanded. Open-heartedness characterized Mother Bourgeoys' daily life. Like St. Paul, she would sometimes "come out strong" with a set of demanding principles as a basis for community living. Also like St. Paul, when it came to the practical application of these, she would always remember the person. The importance of communication was stressed by Mother Bourgeoys. The power of patient discernment was one of Mother Bourgeoys' greatest gifts, thus enabling her to be a peacemaker as well as a strong leader in her community efforts.



*Blessed are the peacemakers,
For they will be called children of God.*

CLOSING PRAYER

May we, the members of the Catholic Women's League, truly become women rooted in gospel values.

May we be a beacon on the hilltop to bring light to a nation in darkness.

May we be the salt of the earth to bring flavour to a nation which has lost its taste for justice and truth.

May we long to be poor in spirit, so we may truly abandon ourselves as Jesus did.

May we embrace our struggles and always pray to our Heavenly Father, "Not my will, but Yours be done," and so inherit the kingdom of heaven.

Our Lady of Good Counsel, intercede for us daily, that we truly may become women of the Beatitudes, rooted in gospel values. May our daily witness be one of love, compassion, and mercy towards all those we meet. May we die to ourselves and so help to lead all people to Your son, Jesus Christ.

We ask this in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

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