

Marriage and Family

Discussion Guide 5

Local phase: September 2022 - June 2023



REGNUM
CHRISTI

Prayer in preparation for the 2024 General Convention



Jesus Christ, gathered in your name as a spiritual family and apostolic body, we place ourselves in your presence.

You have revealed to us the mystery of the love that burns in your apostolic Heart for all men and your desire to reign in our souls and in society.

We feel called to know the gift of Regnum Christi better, so that it will be fruitful in our lives and in the world.

We ask you to send out your Spirit, that he may be light to understand our charism with our minds and hearts, and that we may be always ready to respond to the needs of the Church and the world as apostles of your Kingdom.

Following Mary's example, we want to discover and welcome the action of your Spirit, accepting your plan with faith and singing your praise for the great works that you have done and continue to do.

Jesus Christ, You are the center of our lives. With renewed love, today we say to you, "Christ, our King, Thy Kingdom Come!"

Introduction



You have in your hands a series of eight discussion guides with topics for Encounters with Christ as a team or community. These resources seek to help with apostolic discernment on concrete topics from our life and surroundings. We seek to listen, with all members of Regnum Christi, to the voice of the Lord who invites us to go out and respond to the different needs of the world and the Church from our charism.

Eight areas of the apostolic activity of Regnum Christi have been chosen, which are found in number 11 of the Statutes of the Regnum Christi Federation. These are:

1. The proclamation of the Faith and the New Evangelization
2. The Christian formation and education of children
3. The Christian formation and education of adolescents
4. The Christian formation and education of youth
5. The promotion of marriage and the family
6. Vocational culture and ministry
7. The evangelization of professional and cultural environments
8. Social justice and practice of the works of mercy

Each one of these discussion guides is meant to be used as an Encounter with Christ, in such a way that as a community we can go deeper into each topic and discern what the Lord is inviting us to do as a team, as a section, and as Regnum Christi. With these discussion guides, the topic that is proposed for discussion takes the place of the case study.

In addition to this material, we have the essay published on the Solemnity of the Sacred Heart: The Encounter with Christ in the Life of Regnum Christi: Identity, Foundation, and Dynamic, which explains to us the deep meaning of the Encounter and each one of its parts. This activity, which occupies a central place in the life of the members of Regnum Christi, puts us in contact with the Word and orients the communal discernment of what the Lord expects of us as a team or community.

We offer you here a few practical tips on how to use these discussion guides:

1. With respect to the content of the discussion guides:

Choice of the topic: there are eight topics. Although the discussion guides are numbered in a specific order, not every team has to do all eight topics, nor in that order. Each team is invited to choose those topics that they feel called to contribute to, though it may not be an area that touches their reality or stage of life directly. Each topic should be done in at least one session of the Encounter with Christ, but it can also be done in two sessions if it is considered necessary. It is advisable to know the topic to be discussed beforehand, so as not to waste time choosing it during the Encounter, and in case it is possible to come prepared.

Limitation to one's own environment: discernment of the proposed topics has to be done by placing ourselves in the reality of our own concrete environment, so that we avoid generic reflections and information. Therefore, although each discussion guide includes a general introduction to the topic, the unfolding of the Encounter has to specify the real environment in which we live and move, since that is where we are called to respond. The introduction offers us a description of the topic for discussion, its scope, and what we seek in that Encounter.

Parts: the Encounter follows the ordinary outline of all Encounters with Christ. There is an opening prayer to place ourselves in the presence of God and ask the Holy Spirit for his guidance and light. Then there is the Gospel reflection, for which a passage is provided along with some alternative options. It is recommended that sufficient time be dedicated to the prayerful reading of the Gospel, since discernment is illuminated by it alone. After having encountered Christ through his Word, we turn to the communal discernment of what He expects of us. The discussion guide offers some questions that serve to orient the reflection, following the method of see, judge, and act.

Apostolic dynamism: the fruit of the Encounter with Christ takes shape in actions of conversion in our life and apostolate. In addition to the questions that the discussion guide poses, it is good to listen to see if there is any action that the Lord is inviting us to personally and as a team.

2. Regarding methodology:

Time: it is recommended that the team leader help the team to reach the end of the process of discernment on each topic. Therefore, aware of the time at their disposal (that which is normally set aside for Encounters), they need to calculate the duration of each part and help to carry the conversation along. It is important to ensure that they get to all the different questions. The final question of each discussion guide helps to specify the formulation of what we have perceived to be the invitation of God in that specific area. As we mentioned above, a topic can be discussed in one or two sessions/moments of Encounter with Christ.

Secretary: in addition to the team leader, one person should be assigned to act as the secretary of each Encounter, since it is

important to keep track of what each team sees and proposes in order to discern it in the next step of the process. Therefore, there is a link at the end of each discussion guide where the notes of each Encounter are collected. It is not necessary to write down everything that is said, but only those things that are most interesting and best represent the topic that is being discerned, as well as the concrete resolutions.



Follow the link to the guides for the eight areas of evangelization and the corresponding forms to fill out as a team. www.rcgeneralconvention.org/local-phase-resources/

Marriage and Family

Marriage holds a very special place in the heart of God and in society. God himself wished to be born into, and live in, a family. In it, a human person learns what unconditional love should be, communion, fruitfulness and self-giving.

However, today we find multiple challenges and even visions of marriage that do not conform to the original plan of God. In this context, Regnum Christi, as part of the Church, is called to help others live the plan of God, giving a response, at the same time, to the current popular vision of marriage, by being a light to the world of Christian marriage and family.

Pope John Paul II said in 1981 (the document *Familiaris Consortio*):

The family in the modern world, as much as and perhaps more than any other institution, has been beset by the many profound and rapid changes that have affected society and culture. Many families are living this situation in fidelity to those values that constitute the foundation of the institution of the family. Others have become uncertain and bewildered over their role or even doubtful and almost unaware of the ultimate meaning and truth of conjugal and family life. Finally, there are others who are hindered by various situations of injustice in the realization of their fundamental rights.

Knowing that marriage and the family constitute one of the most precious of human values, the Church wishes to speak and offer her help to those who are already aware of the value of marriage and the family and seek to live it faithfully, to those who are uncertain and anxious and searching for the truth, and to those who are unjustly impeded from living freely their family lives. Supporting the first, illuminating the second and assisting

the others, the Church offers her services to every person who wonders about the destiny of marriage and the family.



1. Opening prayer

We begin this activity with a prayer, asking the Holy Spirit to enlighten our understanding, move our wills, and enkindle our hearts.

It is appropriate to add a Hail Mary or other prayer to invoke the Blessed Virgin, a Glory Be, and the invocations proper to Regnum Christi which seal our prayer by pointing to the goal of all our life and actions – the glory of God.



2. Prayerful reading of the Word

We seek to encounter him in the Gospel in order to place ourselves in an attitude of listening, so that faith and charity will guide our reflections, order our values, and orient our discernment.

A passage of the Gospel is chosen. It could be from the previous or next Sunday, or another passage that is appropriate to the needs of the team.

For today's encounter, please choose one of the following Gospel passages:

John 15: 12-16 The commandment of love

Alternative Gospel:

Mark: 10: 6-9 God made them man and woman



3. Apostolic discernment of reality

After we have encountered Christ through his Word, we undertake a communal discernment of what he expects of us as a team or community in the circumstances of life in which we find ourselves. Consequently, we will observe the reality in which we are immersed

with the desire to discover the best way to carry out our mission of evangelization within it. For today’s encounter with Christ, using the questions provided in this discussion guide, please reflect on: “Marriage and family”.

Follow the link to find all eight discussion guides and the corresponding forms to fill out as a team. www.rcgeneralconvention.org/local-phase-resources/



To see

We want to see the case as God sees it, learning to observe life with objectivity and depth, with reason and faith, discovering how God is present in it.

- What do the people around you think about marriage (family, friends, coworkers)? What elements of our current culture have brought them to this idea?
- What do Christian marriage and family contribute to the world?
- What elements help Christian marriages and families to live their vocation and mission fully? What difficulties do they encounter?

To judge

After we have become more aware of the presence of the wheat and the weeds in the case we have chosen (see Matthew 13:24-30), we want to discern how Jesus judges or interprets our presence, participation, or attitudes before this case, and, consequently, understand what he hopes for from us.

- As Regnum Christi, how can we concretely bring Christ into the marriages and families around us?

- To what degree do you think that Regnum Christi in your locality is responding to the needs of people in this field of evangelization?



To act

This is the moment to choose what actions of conversion and apostolate we are called to in light of what we have discerned that Christ is asking of us. We seek to respond to the invitation from the Lord that we received through the Gospel judgement with our own evangelizing initiative. In this way, we aspire to transform reality with the criteria of the Gospel.

The members suggest possible actions to carry out with regard to themselves, with the goal of their own conversion, and with regard to the reality affected by the case, with the goal of evangelization . In response to the call experienced in the “to judge” element:

- As a team, how can we collaborate with God in his work of making present the kingdom in this area of evangelization?



4. Closing prayer

The Encounter with Christ concludes with a prayer of thanksgiving by one or several members.

The prayer closes with the two invocations to Christ the King and the Virgin Mary proper to Regnum Christi.



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