

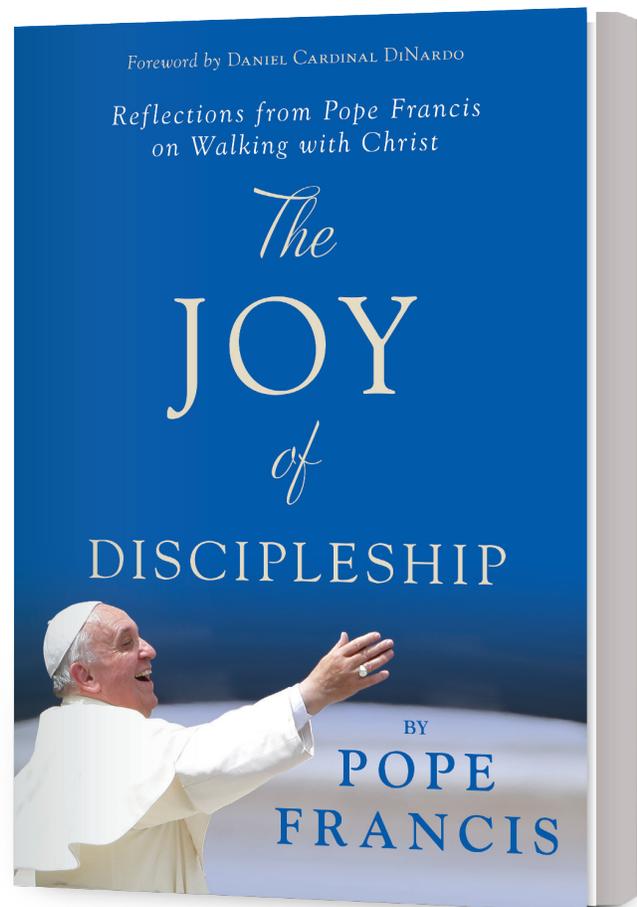


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# A Six-Week Discussion Guide



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**LOYOLA PRESS.**  
UN MINISTERIO JESUITA  
A JESUIT MINISTRY

# **WEEK ONE: Chapters 1–2**

## **Chapter 1, *The Extraordinary Year of Mercy***

1. Pope Francis declared 2016 “The Extraordinary Jubilee of Mercy,” but as Christians we are called to lives of mercy. “[W]herever there are Christians—everyone should find an oasis of mercy.” What does a life of mercy look like to you?
2. Pope Francis reminds us to practice the corporal and the spiritual works of mercy. In what ways do you try to practice the corporal works of mercy in your life?
3. In what ways do you try to practice the spiritual works of mercy in your life?

## **Chapter 2, *The Essential Thing Is Mercy***

4. On page 8, Pope Francis urges us to approach Jesus with an open and honest heart in order to cleanse ourselves of “unclean things,” and then Jesus will trust himself to us. Is that how you try to approach God, or do you try only to show God your best side?
5. When was the last time you celebrated the sacrament of reconciliation? How did you feel afterward? If it has been a long time for you, do you expect to feel the “warm embrace of the Father’s infinite mercy” as Pope Francis describes?
6. How do you perceive the anointing of the sick? Do you associate it with dying, or as a source of relief, strength, and hope? Why?

## **WEEK TWO: Chapters 3–4**

### **Chapter 3, *God's Patience toward Us***

1. In what ways have you remained “closed in our errors and the anxiety of our sins” instead of trusting in God’s patience and mercy?
2. On page 21, Pope Francis references the two disciples and their encounter on the road to Emmaus. Drowning in despair and fear, Jesus sought them out and sparked hope and trust in their hearts. Can you describe a similar time in your life when you felt the comforting presence of Christ?
3. Do you sometimes struggle finding the patience that Pope Francis talks about on page 24?

### **Chapter 4, *Jesus Is Risen! We Have Seen Him!***

4. What does it mean to you that God chose shepherds to be witnesses to the birth of Jesus and women to be witnesses of the Resurrection, even though according to Judaic law of the time “they could not bear a trustworthy, credible witness”?
5. “Why do you see the living among the dead?” is a message intended for all of us, says Pope Francis. What does that message say to you?
6. To “return to Galilee” means to understand everything in life in the context of the cross and its victory. What is your personal Galilee? Where is your Galilee?

# **WEEK THREE: Chapters 5–6**

## **Chapter 5, *Our Joy Is Jesus Christ***

1. Pope Francis writes that “All those who have encountered Jesus along the way experience a serenity and joy in their hearts that nothing and no one can take away.” If this is true, how should a Christian respond to the tragedies and disasters that still occur in our world?
2. What does it mean for the Church to stand “entirely within this movement of God toward the world”?
3. Do you agree with Pope Francis that we must first feel the joy of God’s comfort before we can be messengers of that comfort to others?

## **Chapter 6, *The Presence of God in the Family***

4. In what ways do you practice your faith with your family? If you wish you could do more, what are some ways to do that? Rely in the wisdom and ideas of the group.
5. Pope Francis preaches often about the importance of intergenerational dialogue and exchanges, as he highlights starting on page 45. Why is this important? What can young people learn from their elders?
6. On page 50-51, Pope Francis seems to be telling us to “mind our manners,” but what is the deeper meaning and effect of phrases like “May I?” “Thank you,” and “I’m sorry”?

# **WEEK FOUR: Chapters 7–8**

## **Chapter 7, *Love Is the Measurement of Faith***

1. If love for God and love for neighbor are in fact inseparable and two sides of the same coin, how should that affect the ways in which we engage with the world and the people in it? What if some people hold different beliefs than us? What if some people have committed grave crimes or sins?
2. How can service to others change our perspective on the hardships we encounter in our lives? Can you describe a time when performing an act of service helped you see your own experience differently?
3. What are the dangers of indifference?

## **Chapter 8, *Jesus Has Shared Our Journey***

4. Why does it matter that we are all sinners and in need of the Lord's forgiveness?
5. What are some of the ways in which you might “play God” in your life? What are the things over which you cannot relinquish control?
6. What are some practical ways in which you can practice prayer, fasting, and almsgiving in your daily life?

## **WEEK FIVE: Chapters 9–10**

### **Chapter 9, *The Holy Spirit Is the Soul of Mission***

1. In what ways is the Holy Spirit instilling a sense of astonishment within the world today?
2. When were some times in which you felt the Holy Spirit acting in your life?
3. It might seem counterintuitive to think that fear could be a good thing. Fear can be paralyzing and prevent us from opening ourselves to new experiences. But it can also help us become right-sized and develop a proper sense of perspective. What are some ways in which fear has been a “gift” in your life?

### **Chapter 10, *The Church, God’s Great Family***

4. How does it make you feel to read that “It is not possible ‘to love Christ without the Church, to listen to Christ but not the Church, to belong to Christ but outside the Church’”? What do you think Pope Francis is trying to say at the start of Chapter 10?
5. Pope Francis compares the Church to a family, “a family in which we love and are loved.” What does this metaphor mean to you? Discuss how this metaphor might actually manifest itself in real life. For example, families are not perfect and do not always act in perfect harmony, but they are, hopefully, a source of comfort and solace. How does this compare to the Church?

## **WEEK SIX: Chapters 11–12**

### **Chapter 11, *Mary, Model of Union with Christ***

1. How have you interacted in with Mary in your life? What role has she played in your faith?
2. Pope Francis calls Mary our representative, our sister: “She is the first of the redeemed, who has arrived in Heaven.” How does it affect your perception of Mary to think of her in this way?
3. What does it mean to say that Mary’s “sorrowing heart was enlarged to make room for all men and women—all, whether good or bad—and she loves them as she loved Jesus”? How might this motherly love manifest itself in our world today?

### **Chapter 12, *The Saints, Anchored in Hope***

4. How does it make you feel to think of hope depicted as an anchor?
5. Do you agree that holiness is a vocation for everyone? Is it a vocation for you?
6. Who are the saints you see in the world around you?