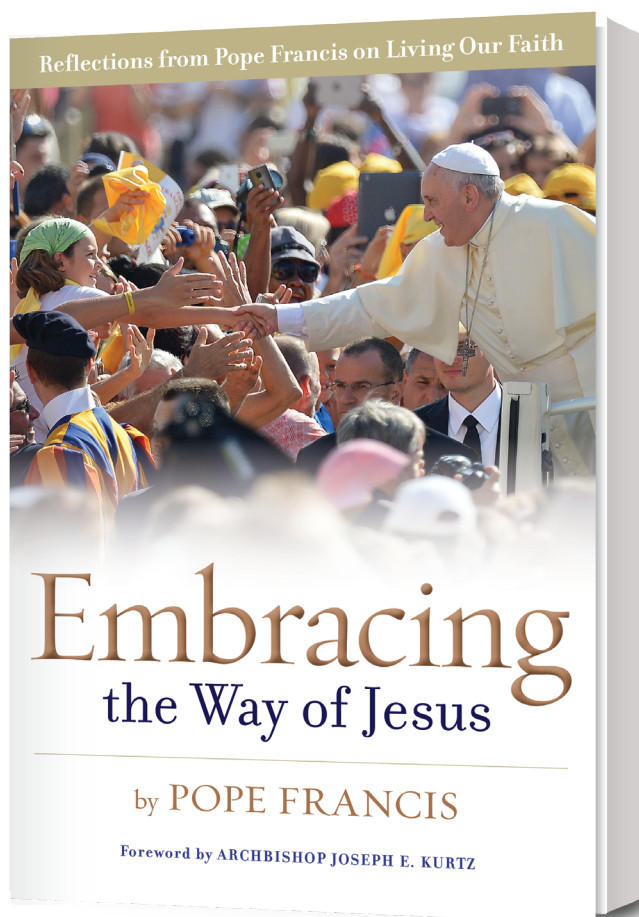




# ONE BOOK ONE PARISH

## A Six-Week Discussion Guide



# WEEK ONE: Foreword, Chapters 1-2

---

1. If you could take a walk with Pope Francis, what would you say to him? What questions do you have for him?
2. Is it important that Jesus' first followers were of a "low profile" or that he came from Galilee? If Jesus were to return today, who do you think would be his first followers? Where would he come from?
3. In what ways are you a witness to the risen Jesus? How do you communicate the living Christ to those around you? Are there ways in which you could do it more effectively?
4. Why do you think the Holy Spirit is "the great One forgotten in our prayers"? What do you think could be the benefit of praying to the Holy Spirit?
5. What does it mean to have a church with "diversity, plurality, and multiplicity" all working together in harmony as opposed to a Church of uniformity? How do you see harmony and/or uniformity manifested in the Church today?

## WEEK TWO: Chapters 3–4

---

1. What are the dangers of putting ourselves and our interests first? Are there ways in which you try to put yourself in God's place?
2. What does it mean to be your brother's keeper in today's world? What are some ways in which you are your brother's keeper? Are there ways in which you could improve?
3. Pope Francis writes that even a people who "have seen a great light" have darkness all around—and within—they. There is always a struggle to follow the path laid out by God. What are some ways that you see this struggle happening around you?
4. On page 28, Pope Francis describes the actions of Pontius Pilate, Simon of Cyrene, and Mary and the women who accompanied Jesus to the end. In what ways are you like Pilate? Like Simon? Like Mary?
5. Would the Lord feel at home in your life?
6. How is it that the Cross of Jesus can both "express all the negative forces of evil" while also representing "all the gentle omnipotence of God's mercy"?

## WEEK THREE: Chapters 5–6

---

1. What are some ways in which you—other than with your words—worship God?
2. Are there small or great idols in your life that interfere with your worship of God? Can you share some of them with the group?
3. Do you celebrate the liturgy for one hour per week and then go on with the rest of your life, having met your Sunday obligation? Or do you then spend the rest of the week in a living correspondence with the liturgy? In what ways do you do either one or—more likely—both?
4. Pope Francis mentions the differences between the Pharisee's prayers and those of the tax collector. Can you describe the difference in your own words?
5. What are the prayers that bring you the most comfort and strength? Do you tend to focus on the memorized prayers you learned as a child, or do you pray in your own words?

## WEEK FOUR: Chapters 7–8

---

1. What is the responsibility of a follower of Christ to work for justice in the world?
2. How do you see the “throwaway culture” of today affecting the people around you? What attitudes does it perpetuate?
3. Parts of Chapter 7 can be difficult to discuss because of how faith and politics intersect in our modern world. With respect and compassion for each other, contemplate and then discuss among each other the passage on page 54: “To speak of *transcendent human dignity* thus means appealing to human nature, to our innate capacity to distinguish good from evil, to that ‘compass’ deep within our hearts, which God has impressed upon all creation. Above all, it means regarding human beings not as absolutes but as *beings in relation*.” What are some ways in which we treat each other as “beings in relation”? What are some ways in which we fail to live up to that goal?
4. What does it mean to be a “people of the Beatitudes”? In what ways does the Church do this today? In what ways has the Church failed to live up to its responsibilities to do this?
5. How might the miracle of the loaves and fish impact the ways in which we as a society respond to the poor?

## WEEK FIVE: Chapters 9–10

---

1. Do you agree with Pope Francis that every living creature “has an intrinsic value in its existence,” or are the resources of the natural world ours to exploit? Are there responsible or compassionate ways in which we can utilize natural resources?
2. Is it possible to combat poverty, restore dignity to the excluded, and protect nature in a profitable and prosperous way? Or are those approaches opposed to each other?
3. Why is it significant that Pope Francis is calling marriage a “true and authentic vocation” in Chapter 10?
4. Do you agree that the three most important phrases in a healthy family are “please, thank you, sorry”? Is one more important than the others? Are there other phrases that are necessary to a healthy family?
5. What are the gifts of having grandparents and the elderly in our lives?

## WEEK SIX: Chapters 11–12

---

1. How would our lives and our world be different if we lived as if we were children, in need of help, love, and forgiveness? In what ways does a façade of self-sufficiency harm us?

2. Engage in the thought experiment Pope Francis proposes on page 86:

Think what a society would be like if it decided, once and for all, to establish this principle: “It’s true, we are not perfect, and we make many mistakes. But when it comes to the children who come into the world, no sacrifice on the part of adults is too costly or too great to ensure that no child believes he or she was a mistake, is worthless, or abandoned to a life of wounds and to the arrogance of men.”

3. What are some ways in which you can attempt to follow the example of Mary and not live “with haste”?

4. Is Mary a source of hope and joy in your life? If yes, share with the group how this happens or any special devotions to Mary you practice. If not, how do you respond to Pope Francis’ love for Mary expressed in Chapter 12?