

Small Group Discussion Questions

Talk #1: Theology of the Body Overview

1. What struck you most about this first session?
2. How is it that the TOB can act as a “delivery system” of all varieties of Catholic teaching?
3. What are the modern signs of the “smearing of the dignity” of our young people?
4. Why do you think connecting young people to their ultimate purpose is so important?
5. Why is helping our young people to see the reality that they were created for communion so important?
6. What practical ways can you bring the hope of this message of love to your middle schoolers?
7. Why is establishing an “adequate anthropology” so important for young people today?
8. What do you see as indicators that middle schoolers are primed and ready for the TOB?
9. What about marriage is unique for middle schoolers and their experiences when presenting this message?
10. How can we assure them of the hope found in the spousal analogy of God and man?

Talk #2: Who am I: Discovering my True Identity (Chapter 1)

1. What struck you most about this talk?
2. What evidence of an identity crisis do you see in your young people? Why is a strong sense of identity so important for them?
3. Why is it so important for middle schoolers to begin thinking in terms of purpose (where they are headed and how they are going to get there)?
4. How do you see yourself using the info about your middle schoolers from the “If You Ask Me” exercises in this chapter?
5. What particular challenges do we face when presenting that, “the world is not all bad, but it certainly is confused about what makes a person matter?”
6. Why is it particularly helpful to offer the teens a personal relationship with God through the lens of the Theology of the Body?
7. How are we helping our young people live in authentic freedom?

Talk #3: Me, Myself, and I: Body and Soul (Chapter 3)

1. What struck you most about this talk?
2. How do you see the development of the language of the body among your young people?
3. How do you think the stories that introduce important concepts (such as Aimee’s story about her dad) will resonate with your young people?
4. Why is it important to emphasize that we do not just have bodies, but are body and soul?
5. How might the language of the body through the lens of TOB offer a deepening understanding of Jesus’ incarnation and sacrifice for us?
6. Jesus’ life reveals the full truth of human nature. (“He is the ‘human-est’ of all humans.”) How do you see that understanding impacting the lives of young people?
7. How have you seen the phrase, “I’m only human,” used in a misguided way?
8. Why do you think a visible crucifix is pivotal to this chapter?

Talk #4: Sex, Love, and Chastity (Chapter 5)

1. What struck you most about this talk?
2. Do you feel apprehensive about addressing this chapter's topic? Talk it out.
3. What might you say to your middle schoolers to set the tone for this lesson?
4. Does anything in your own experience echo the "Bee Your Self" story starter?
5. Why is it important to start with the fact that the word "sex" is about male and femaleness before it is about an act?
6. How do you see the lessons of chapters 1-4 as scaffolding for this discussion? (Hint: it is done very intentionally)
7. Why is the message of complementarity so particularly important for our day and age? How would you articulate that message?
8. What, in your opinion, sets the presentation in chapter 5 apart from the stereotypical "talk" often given to this age group?
9. How would you articulate the difference between abstinence and chastity?
10. Many young people have already been hurt in various ways when it comes to their sexuality. What sorts of things do you think your young people might have already been through? How do you envision preparing yourself to minister to a young person who comes to talk to you about a past hurt?

Talk #5: To Use or Not to Use? That is the Question (Chapter 6)

1. What struck you most about this talk?
2. Your Turn: What is Love?
3. What misconceptions about love would you imagine your middle schoolers will have before beginning this program?
4. How do you see the culture of use being a problem even at the middle school level?
5. What is the proper relationship between *eros* and *agape*? How do you see these concepts resonating with young people?
6. Pornography and sexting are two important issues because they are so culturally prevalent. How can we protect our young people from the tremendous dangers inherent in these two problems?
7. So why should sex be saved for marriage? How is the language of the body pivotal for answering this question effectively?
8. How far is too far? How can we answer this question in a satisfactory and practical way for our young people to understand?
9. How do you see yourself implementing the case studies and special materials for more sensitive issues?
10. You have an important mission in mentoring young people through this program. How are you going to prepare? (Think "Eye of the Tiger")