

Chapter 7

Continuing the Work of the Apostles

Getting Started

Assign the students to read Chapter 7, "Continuing the Work of the Apostles." Use the following questions from the Student Text to guide a discussion of the chapter:

- Describe a time you sacrificed for another. Describe a time when someone sacrificed for you.
- Who is someone you know who models the servant leadership of Christ? How so?
- How can you practice the "apostolate of the presence" by bringing Christ to others?

(See the Student Text for additional questions.) Then ask the students to read the following article.

Application Reading

<http://www.americancatholic.org/Messenger/Feb1997/feature2.asp>

CARDINAL JOSEPH L. BERNARDIN: DIDN'T HE SHOW US THE WAY?

He was a man of enormous contributions and accomplishments for our Church. But it might be the events at the end of his life that leave the deepest impression.

By John Bookser Feister

Any day now Cardinal Joseph L. Bernardin's final book, *The Gift of Peace*, will show up in bookstores. Finishing the manuscript a week before his November 14 death, he hoped to teach the Church what he had learned from the experience of suffering and forgiveness, and from letting go at the end of life. Yet even his own writing will provide only a glimpse of this man who did so much and was so much for the Catholic Church in our country and beyond. There is no way to sum up neatly the multifaceted legacy of Cardinal Bernardin's earthly life.

Discussion

Lead the students in a discussion of the following questions:

1. What are some way(s) that Cardinal Bernardin reflected the example of Christ in his ministry? (Some examples include: at the end of his life, he focused his ministry on caring for the sick and troubled (rather than retreating into himself); he visited his own mother daily and once visited a prisoner on death row; he responded to persecution with patience and forgiveness; he witnessed to peace in his work on the bishops' peace pastoral.)
2. What are some of the ways that Cardinal Bernardin proclaimed the Gospel to others? (He proclaimed the Gospel through his lived example; through his book (*The Gift of Peace*); through his Common Ground initiative; and through his leadership roles in the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, among other examples.)
3. What were some of the personal qualities that Bernardin brought to his ministry, according to those who knew him? (Examples include: patience; an ability to listen well; an ability to bring people with diverging viewpoints together; humility; courage; a commitment to the truth; and compassion.)
4. What do you think was Bernardin's greatest accomplishment? How do you think Bernardin's role as a priest and successor to the apostles uniquely contributed to his accomplishments?
5. What do you think is the most important thing that other priests and bishops might learn from Bernardin's example?

Activity

Priestly people

- In this activity, students identify the most influential role models in their lives and consider the character traits of those role models in light of the common priesthood of all believers. For this activity, the students will need paper and a pencil. Optionally, you may want to provide background music appropriate for quiet reflection.

- Begin this activity by noting the profound effect that Cardinal Bernardin had on the people around him. Through his words and actions, he gave people hope and taught them how to live more like Christ. As we seek to embrace our own baptismal priesthood, it helps to have role models like Cardinal Bernardin who can “show us the way” to continue Christ’s saving mission in the world.
- Ask the students: Who are your role models? Who shows you the way to be in the world? Instruct the students to spend some time quietly reflecting on this question. They should begin by writing down the name(s) of the people who serve as role models for them. Under each name, the students should list the qualities and characteristics that make that person a good role model—qualities and characteristics that the students would like to emulate.
- When the students have finished making their lists, have them review the list, circling those qualities and characteristics that are most consistent with the priesthood that all believers are called to participate in by virtue of their baptism.
- Conclude the activity with a prayer. Have the students form a circle. Say: “God, you call us through baptism to participate in the priesthood of your Son, Jesus Christ. Give us role models who show us how to be more like you. Give us the grace to imitate the best qualities of our role models.” Have each student in turn prayerfully read the Christ-like qualities of his or her role models. When the last student finishes, conclude the prayer: “We ask for the grace of these gifts in the name of your Son, Jesus Christ. Amen.”

Additional Activities

- Have the students complete the “Prayer for Priests and Bishops” activity on page 202 of the Student Textbook.
- Have the students complete the “Qualities of Leadership” activity on page 213 of the Student Textbook.
- Have the students role-play transitions that affect marriage as described in step #6 under the Teaching Approaches heading in the “Marriage Is a Lifelong Commitment” section of the Teacher’s Wraparound Edition.
- Lead the students in the prayer service described in step #4 under the Teaching Approaches heading in the “Chapter 6 Review” section of the Teacher’s Wraparound Edition.
- Have the students complete the “Promises to Keep” (Handout 37) found in the Teacher’s Wraparound Edition.
- Have the students complete the “Against the Dignity of Marriage” (Handout 39) found in the Teacher’s Wraparound Edition.

Additional Resources

For Internet resources, see the Teacher’s Wraparound Edition.

An appropriate video for this unit (Chapters 7, 8, and 9) is *God or the Girl* (A&E Home Video, 225 minutes), a documentary that follows four young men for five weeks as they discern their vocation.