

Marriage Discussion Preparation Sheet

Thank you for agreeing to speak with a class of high school students who are studying the meaning of Church. This lesson focuses on the image of the Church as the “Bride of Christ.”

The format of the discussion will be as follows:

Introduction

- Briefly introduce yourselves.
- Tell how you met.
- Tell something about your courtship.
- Tell how you became engaged.
- Tell something about your marriage preparation.
- Share one memorable part of your wedding day.

This part of your presentation should be about five or six minutes.

Issues

- How does God play a part in your relationship?
- What is the most difficult part of marriage?
- What is the most joyful part of marriage?
- As far as the Church goes, how does its image as the “bride of Christ” compare with your relationship to your spouse?

This part of your presentation should be about three or four minutes.

Questions

The final part of the panel discussion will be a question-and-answer segment. The teens have formed their own questions. Here are some samples:

- How did you know you had met the “right” person?
- How was the subject of marriage first brought up between the two of you?
- How do you handle serious arguments?
- Do you think there is an ideal age or time for two people to be married?
- Why is it important for you to get along with in-laws?
- Do you think your marriage reflects your family upbringing? How or how not?
- What part does prayer play in your relationship?
- How important is the Church in your married life?

The Permanent Elements of the Church Case Studies

Using what you know about permanent constitution, permanent ethic, and permanent body of dogma in the Church, respond to the arguments of the following people.

1. Sam is arguing that the Church should be a democracy. Whenever there is disagreement over an issue a vote should be taken. Sam insists that if the majority of Catholics feel that a particular behavior is acceptable, it is clearly acceptable in our day and time regardless of the past. What do you think?

2. Terry believes that the structures of leadership in the Catholic Church are obsolete. Terry argues that it would be preferable to have a Church in which leaders were designated for each specific task and in which all people were in charge of something. If that is not possible, Terry says that at least the leaders should be chosen by the people. What do you think?

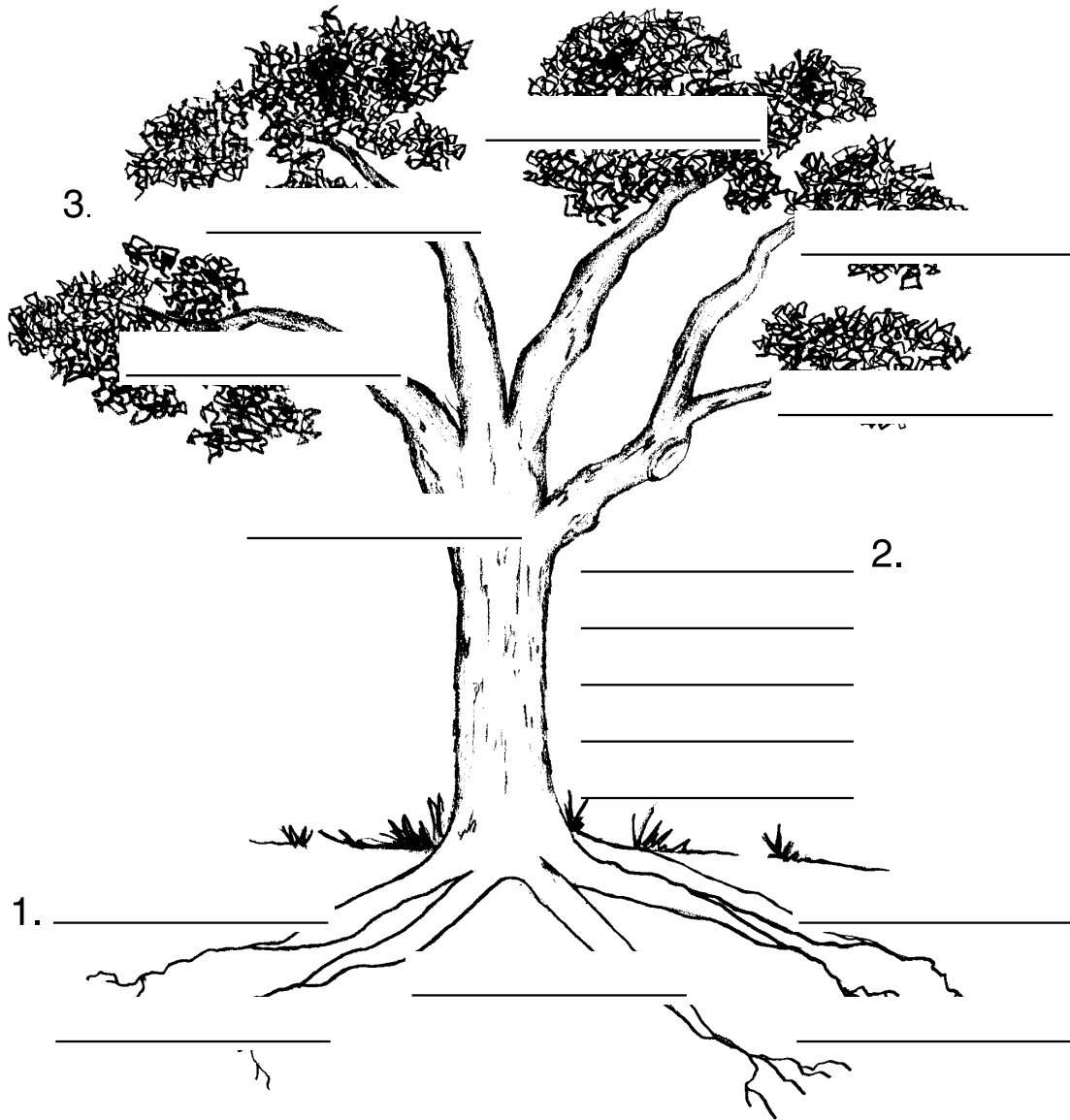
3. Chris is angry that the Catholic Church isn't doing "enough" to promote natural family planning. Chris says that the Church is just caving into society. Chris knows that in the early twentieth century the Church taught that all attempts to limit the number of children were considered wrong. "If it was wrong then, it must be wrong now. Ethics shouldn't change." What do you think?

4. Casey insists that anyone who questions anything the pope says is not really a Catholic. Casey says that Jesus gave the Church to Peter and all the popes who succeeded him. Everyone else is a member of the Church to the extent that they align themselves with the pope. What do you think?

5. Lee says that just because Jesus taught that something was wrong does not make it wrong today. Lee says that the Church must evaluate what Jesus taught in light of the culture of his day. Lee says that the role of the Magisterium is to determine which of Jesus' teachings are still valid. According to Lee, Jesus gave the apostles and their successors the right to establish the standards of right and wrong using whatever criteria was appropriate to their situation. What do you think?

6. Pat refuses to recite the creed during Mass. Pat says that is not up to the Church to tell people what they should and should not believe, or to put words in their mouth concerning their beliefs. Pat believes that there should be a period of silence during which each person is invited to reflect upon those things which he or she believes. What do you think?

Family Tree



Instructions

1. Write the significant events that have influenced your family at its roots.
2. On the trunk of the tree, write the characteristics of your immediate family which have resulted from the events or traits written on the roots.
3. On the main branch and the small branches, write personal characteristics which have developed in response to what is on the trunk and roots.

Psalm 90

O Lord, you have been our refuge
through all generations.
Before the mountains were begotten
and the earth and the world were brought forth,
from everlasting to everlasting you are God.
You turn man back to dust,
saying, "Return, O children of men."
For a thousand years in your sight
are as yesterday, now that is past,
or as a watch of the night.
You make an end of them in their sleep;
the next morning they are like the changing grass,
Which at dawn springs up anew,
but by evening wilts and fades.
Truly we are consumed by your anger,
and by your wrath we are put to rout.
You have kept our iniquities before you,
our hidden sins in the light of your scrutiny.
All our days have passed away in your indignation;
we have spent our years like a sigh.
Seventy is the sum of our years,
or eighty, if we are strong.
And most of them are fruitless toil,
for they pass quickly and we drift away.
Who knows the fury of your anger
or your indignation toward those
who should fear you?
Teach us to number our days aright,
that we may gain wisdom of heart.
Return, O Lord! How long?
Have pity on your servants!
Fill us at daybreak with your kindness,
that we may shout for joy and gladness all our days.
Make us glad, for the days when you afflicted us,
for the years when we saw evil.
Let your work be seen by your servants
and your glory by their children;
And may gracious care of the Lord our God be ours;
prosper the work of our hands for us!
[Prosper the work of our hands!]