

Sharpening Your Tongue: A Regnum Christi Essay on Charity in Our Words

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[Study Circle Guide prepared by Fr. John Bartunek, LC, SThD]

Overview

SUMMARY

This Study Circle Guide is only a pointer to a ready-to-go resource perfect for a practical, in-depth study about the privileged Regnum Christi virtue of charity in words: Sharpening Your Tongue: A Regnum Christi Essay on Charity in Our Words.

This Essay was designed from the beginning to be useful for individuals, small groups, and even classrooms, either for spiritual reading, personal meditation, or group study. It provides sufficient structure for effective small group meetings, but avoids an overabundance of stifling material.

It focuses on understanding how to live the virtue of charity in our words - spoken, written, and even thought.

The Essay explores the two possible exaggerations of what the Regnum Christi Movement has traditionally called the virtue of “benedicencia”, “speaking well of others.” It provides lively philosophical reflections on the nature and purpose of human language and communication. It helps readers deepen and broaden their understanding of this key arena of virtue (and the contrary vices) by weaving together reflections from the Bible, the Catechism, and other sources.

It is divided into fifteen short sections, and each section concludes with two appendices: one with a personal practical examination to help assimilate the principles explained in the Essay and another with a list of questions for group discussion.

CATEGORIES OF INTEREST

Virtue; Spiritual Growth; Regnum Christi Spirituality

RECOMMENDED NUMBER OF SESSIONS

This Essay can be used as a Study Circle Guide in two ways.

1. All group members can read the entire Essay before meeting and then go through the group discussion questions in the second appendix, taking as much time as they need to go deep.
2. The group could read together each section of the Essay, and then pause to discuss that section, using generic questions like the following:
 - What struck me most in this section and why? What, if anything, did I not understand fully in this section?
 - How would I explain the main point of this section in my own words?
 - How can the main point of this section apply to me personally in my current season of life?

In this second method, the group could proceed at a natural pace, taking as much time as necessary to read through the entire Essay. Ideally, the group facilitator would have read the entire Essay to avoid having the group get into heated discussions about topics that will be explained later in the Essay.

MATERIALS NEEDED

Everyone will need a copy of the Essay.

Optional: If you have never moderated a small group study, we recommend that you read “The Better Part Group Study Guide,” published at www.SpiritualDirection.com and available there as a free download. This is a leader’s guide that explains how to use The Better Part in a group discussion setting. It is short and provides extremely helpful hints for any small group activity.

WHO CAN PARTICIPATE?

Anyone who desires to develop this virtue of charity in words. The book is entirely self-explanatory. It begins with specific references to Regnum Christi, so those would need to be explained to someone unfamiliar with the Movement.

HOW MUCH HOMEWORK?

The amount of homework will depend on the modality of study chosen. Either everyone will need to read the whole Essay ahead of time, or everyone can read it together in the actual meeting, section by section.