

The Faith-Filled Catholic Women's Bible Study Program

A Leader's Guide for Group Discussion

Diligence

Song: "Stand Firm"
CD 1, Track 3

Insert C-1 through C-4

Composer: Donna Peña

Faith-Filled Catholic Women's Bible Music CD

Materials Needed

Faith-Filled Catholic Women's Bible and Music CD, CD player, Participant's Worksheet.

Setting the Stage

Before this session, mail (or e-mail) any member of the group that may not have been present at the last session the Participant's Worksheet for this session. Also, send a reminder of the date and time of the session as well as directions to the meeting place (if different from the church). To enhance the theme of **Diligence**, have the music song "Stand Firm" from the Faith-Filled Catholic Women's Bible Music CD playing in the background when members of the group arrive.

Warm Up - Optional (10 minutes)

Ask each participant to share her answer to this question: If my relationship with God could be made into a movie or a TV series, what would the title and/or the set-up for the program be? After sharing, take a vote on who came up with the most creative title.

Opening Discussion (15 minutes)

Have the participants read the **Plan and Purpose** article on insert page C-1. Then, ask them to share and discuss their answers to the following questions: Can you identify with the words of St. Paul? Do you sometimes feel like you are in a "race?" If so, how would you characterize your "race of faith?" Is it a series of sprints or is it a marathon? Which is more effective? How does being Catholic make our journey unique? Do you think being diligent is a shared experience in faith or is it more personal for you?

Spiritual Awakening - Opening Prayer

Have the participants read together the **Opening Prayer** at the top of insert page C-2.

Spiritual Awakening - Recognizing (10 minutes)

Ask for volunteers to read aloud each of the Scripture passages in the **Recognizing** section of **Spiritual Awakening** on insert page C-2. Remind the participants that each reader will pause for a few seconds of silence after each passage to allow anyone to offer any spontaneous thought, prayer, praise or thanksgiving that this Scripture might inspire. After the final Scripture is read, ask the group, "What else do these Scriptures teach us about **Diligence**?" Share and discuss why diligence in faith is especially important in today's world.

Spiritual Awakening - 1st Reflection (20 minutes)

Ask a volunteer to read Mark 1:35 (Page 1066). Then, have the participants discuss the following questions: Are you diligent in your prayer? What is the quality of your prayer life? Do you create a special place and time for God each day? Is there a balance between prayers of adoration and thanksgiving and prayers of petition when you pray? Ask each participant to share how she approaches prayer (spontaneous, memorized, scheduled, time of day, etc.) and, as a result, what role prayer plays in her life.

Faith In Action (15 minutes)

Read the **Faith in Action** article "The Hidden Garden" on insert page C-4. After silent reflection, ask each participant her answer to this question: What are some of the "weeds" (distractions, obstacles, etc.) that grow in our lives that can easily choke out spending time with God?

Group Prayer/Closing Prayer (5 minutes)

Leader: Focused on the importance of prayer and with hearts full of hope, we ask God to accept our praises, hear our thanks and answer our prayers for the intentions we voice and for the intentions we keep in our hearts: **enter aloud all individual intentions.**

Then, all pray together:

Heavenly Father, give us the diligence we need to live a Christ-like life. Keep us free from temptation so that our eyes can remain fixed on You. Through the intercession of St. Jane Frances de Chantal, we ask You to send good people into our lives to show us the way. Keep our minds and hearts open to Your will. In Jesus' name we pray, Amen.

Fellowship (15 minutes)

After the session is completed and while refreshments are served, play softly in the background: "Stand Firm" from the Faith-Filled Catholic Women's Bible Music CD.

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