

What is celibate life in the Church?



PRAY

My Lord and my God!

Someday we will all be united with you, oh God. Then you will be our “everything,” our love, our peace and our happiness. Be with those who have set a great example and have already renounced the happiness of marriage for the sake of Heaven. Amen.



CONTEMPLATE

One person reads the Bible passage aloud.
Short silence.

Exchange: *What particularly appealed to you?*



STUDY

1. Read YOUCAT text sentence-for-sentence. Then one person reads the text aloud in full.
2. Three minutes of silence.
3. Each person reads a word or phrase aloud (without comment) that he or she has noticed.
4. Explain briefly in the next round why you have chosen the sentence (e.g. memories, questions, etc.).



DISCUSS

Also discuss your own questions on this topic!

Treasure Book: *Take five minutes to write down what you don't want to forget.*



CHALLENGE

Our **CHALLENGES** are just suggestions you can make in addition to your study guide meetings. You can also replace them with stronger, more fitting, more original or better ones. Just let us know at feedback@youcat.org.

#YOUCATChallenge: *Share your experience on Facebook or Instagram.*



Lk 18:29-30

He said to them, "Amen, I say to you, there is no one who has given up house or wife or brothers or parents or children for the sake of the kingdom of God who will not receive back an overabundant return in this present age and eternal life in the age to come."

258 *Why does the Church require priests and bishops to live a celibate life?*

Jesus lived as a celibate and in this way intended to show his undivided love for God the Father. To follow Jesus' way of life and to live in unmarried chastity "for the sake of the kingdom of heaven" (Mt 19:12) has been since Jesus' time a sign of love, of undivided devotion to the Lord, and of a complete willingness to serve. The Roman Catholic Church requires this way of life of its bishops and priests, while the Eastern Catholic Churches demand it only of their bishops. [1579–1580, 1599]

Celibacy, says Pope Benedict, cannot mean “remaining empty in love, but rather must mean allowing oneself to be overcome by a passion for God.” A priest who lives as a celibate should be fruitful inasmuch as he represents the fatherly character of God and Jesus. The Pope goes on to say, “Christ needs priests who are mature and manly, capable of exercising a true spiritual fatherhood.”

1. Why was Jesus not married?
2. What is the difference between a celibate and an ordinary single person?
3. No man can renounce love. At what point and for what reasons can men refuse sex, either temporarily or forever?
4. Is celibacy a devaluation of marriage so that married Christians might be considered “less good” Christians?

During the next week, ask a priest or a religious why they have chosen to live in celibacy.

Or search the internet for saints who considered it important to live in celibacy the way Jesus did (Such as John Paul II, Mother Theresa, Charles de Foucauld, Therese von Lisieux).

Do you accept this challenge?

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