

SEMINAR 6 Journey to the Flame

NEEDING A COMMUNITY



Starting a Fire

1. To start a fire, you bring the logs together, knowing that the closer they are, the more they can keep the fire alive. To put out a fire, you separate the logs, not wanting them to rekindle one another.
2. The gathered logs symbolize a Flame of Love community that keeps the Flame of Love alive. The scattered logs symbolizes individualism, when no one gathers in a cenacle. Then, Our Lady's Flame goes out easily.

The Master Builder

3. Let's use another example, of Jesus as a master builder.
4. When Jesus comes along, we are separate bricks, scattered on the ground. To build his community, he picks us up and joins us with others.
5. As He puts us together with others in this Flame of Love Movement, we realize that he is forming a foundation. We don't know what kind of building he plans – large or small. We only know that he has pulled us together. He will be back tomorrow to do more work. After all, He is the master builder.
6. When Jesus comes back in the morning and finds all of us in place, he puts other stones on top of us and uses us as his foundation. All we have to do is to stay where Jesus put us. We cannot go wandering off.

Staying Together

7. The logs in a fire and the stones of a building are images of a regular and strong commitment of gathering in a cenacle.

Forming A Community

8. This is a new idea. Catholics attend mass but never think of joining with others in a Movement. So, let's describe the benefits of a Flame of Love Community.

9. People are automatically members of a family community, a work (or school) community and a neighborhood community.
10. Flame of Love is different because it is an intentional community. People become members by a deliberate choice and the community continues only when the members are faithful.
11. A Flame of Love community's existence depends upon people being deeply motivated to set aside their personal desires, and be present for the cenacle.
12. The following offers motivations to make these sacrifices.

Forming Community is God's Way

13. For many centuries, God formed Israel into His community. He blessed them, guided them and made a Covenant with them. God's unique, particular love for Israel might puzzle us, unless we grasp God's plan.
14. To reveal Himself and His truths, God needed a people who would listen and record His word. That community would have the Sacred Scriptures and a history of God's actions.
15. He also wanted to send His Son. Jesus had to be born into Israel, because they were the only community who understood and were prepared to receive the Messiah.

Jesus' Method

16. Jesus' ministry was two-fold. He certainly preached to the crowds, but He spent most of His time forming His disciples into a community.
17. After the resurrection, Jesus did not appear to the crowds, but only to the community of disciples. Peter accurately described what Jesus did. "God raised Jesus on the third day and granted that he be visible, not to all the people, but to us, the witnesses chosen by God in advance, who ate and drank with him after he rose from the dead. (Acts 10:40-41).
18. After ascending into heaven, Jesus specifically sent the Holy Spirit upon this little community (120) gathered in the Upper Room. The whole future of the world depended on this little community to receive the Holy Spirit and to follow His promptings.
19. The apostles also formed communities. After the 3000 were baptized on Pentecost Day, they didn't just go their separate ways. They stayed together and formed the first Christian community. "They devoted themselves to the teaching of the apostles and to the communal life, to the breaking of the bread (Eucharist) and to the prayers (devout life)". (Acts 2:42)

Motivations

20. Some motivations for forming a community are the following.
21. Great accomplishments are seldom done alone. A team of scientists is needed to make medical breakthroughs. Even the greatest genius had many helpers, quite essential to the work. Alone, you will accomplish little. Joined with others, you will bless many others.
22. People gathered in a group become a living invitation for others to join with them. People at home watching television invite no one.
23. Jesus said that the disciples loving one another in the Christian community would be a sign to others. How can you love others when you never come together?

The Local Cenacle is Needed to Form a Movement

24. How can there be a Flame of Love Movement, if no one joins together regularly?
25. People joined together are an outward sign that something very important is taking place (for those who gather and for those who want to join).
26. Our parishes should not be service stations where we receive sacraments and then go home to our individual lives. We should be God's family. We must stay around and put our lives together.
27. Only a community communicates the Flame of Love, which Our Lady wants passed on. You received your Flame of Love through a community and you will pass it on by being a member of a community.

Various Communities

28. These communities will come in all shapes and sizes. God loves diversity. He loves small and large communities; family and parish communities; daily, weekly and monthly communities. God loves for us to come together in many ways.
29. With all their diversity, these communities will have a clear identity called "Flame of Love Spirituality".

Their Spirituality

30. Because God has placed this Flame (Jesus) in Mary's Immaculate Heart, the spirituality focuses on going to Jesus through Mary.
31. The Eucharist is the center. The mass comes first, followed by Eucharistic adoration.
32. Next comes the daily Rosary and the Hail Mary using the added words, "Spread the effect of the grace of thy Flame of Love over all humanity."
33. The purpose of the Movement is to save souls, (your own first and then others), by blinding Satan and freeing people to choose God.

34. The means to accomplish these goals is the formation of prayer cenacles.

Why the Need of the Community

35. Being faithful to a parish or home Flame of Love Community keeps everyone focused on the goals. Members encourage each other. They invite each other to remain faithful, (sometimes the road to heaven seems very long). They do not allow other commitments to crowd out the time needed for the prayer cenacle.
36. The community keeps first things first. That is not easy to accomplish (especially with modern lifestyles that leave little time for God.)
37. The community is absolutely needed for each person to live a devout life. That is the topic for our final seminar.

Questions

1. Have you ever been a member of a spirituality group?
2. Do you see the need for participating in a Flame of Love community?
3. What blessing will you receive?
4. What obstacles might weaken your commitment?
5. Will you persevere, month after month, year after year?

DAILY BIBLE READING

During the week, please read the themes of the following texts that explain this seminar.

Day 1 Jesus spends most of his ministry forming the community of disciples, explaining that they must serve one another.
(Mark 9:30-37)

Day 2 Jesus' greatest happiness was when He ate with His disciples at the Last Supper.
(John 13:1-11)

Day 3 Even in their fear, the disciples stayed together. Jesus returned a week later to join Thomas to the community.
(John 20:19-29)

Day 4 At His Ascension, Jesus told the disciples to remain in community, so they would all receive the Spirit.
(Acts 1:4-12)

Day 5 Peter makes certain that the community of the apostles would be restored to 12.

(Acts 1:15-26)

Day 6 The 3,000 newly baptized form the first Jerusalem community.
(Acts 2:42-47)

Day 7 St. Paul uses the image of the human body to describe the Christian community with its oneness and its diversity. (1 Corinthians 12:12-31)

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