

## Facilitator Guide

1. The word “facilitator” is deliberate. These bible studies are intended to be run by anyone, not necessarily a leader who can teach the topic. It’s OK if the facilitator does not know all the answers. In fact, it would actually be helpful for participants to see that a facilitator doesn’t necessarily have all the answers as they would likely identify with them.
2. The aim is not necessarily to do a full catechesis on a topic. Rather, it is to foster discussion. The value comes from the relationships in the group and people seeing that other people have similar struggles or questions. Some catechesis will certainly happen, but the focus should be on generating discussion.
3. The studies are designed to be completed in less than an hour.
4. The reference guide is intended to be printed and handed out, along with the questions. The reason for this is that many of the discussion questions refer back to quotes from the Bible or Catechism that are in the references. Having them easily accessible on a piece of paper should help participants discuss them more thoughtfully, without going back and forth on their phones to find the quotes.
5. All groups are different. If you do not already have a structure to your group meeting, consider this suggested format:
  - a. First 15 minutes, mingling and ideally, snacking on chips or other finger foods (this can also be delegated to different members to bring snacks each week - food facilitates relationships!)
  - b. Spend 30 minutes on the study. Approximately 5 or 10 minutes to go through the material and read the references, then 20 - 25 minutes discussing the questions.
  - c. For the last 15 minutes, ask people if they have any needs in their life they would like prayer for (e.g., they have a medical need, they lost their job, they’re in a conflict with their parents, etc.).
    - i. It’s important to keep people from rambling for a long time. The facilitator might want to ask people to share their needs “in 30 seconds or less”
    - ii. The needs should be focused on that person, or a very close family member. It should not be “my cousin’s wife’s aunt’s dog is having surgery tomorrow”.
    - iii. Not everyone should be expected to have a prayer request. It could just be a few people. The facilitator can break the ice by being the first to share a request.
    - iv. As a group, pray an our father or hail mary, lifting up all these prayers to God. The facilitator can start the prayer by saying something like “ok, let’s lift all of these up to God. Our father, who art in heaven ....”
    - v. Note, there is a significant value in these prayers. The value is not only in God’s answers to those prayers, but in the effect it has on the relationships within the group. It will draw people closer together, and they will feel the love of God through the love and caring of the others in the group.