



Discussion and Reflection Guide for

HEAD & HEART: BECOMING SPIRITUAL LEADERS FOR YOUR FAMILY

by **Katie Warner**
foreword by **Bishop James Conley**
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Introduction: Your Most Important Job

What does the word *leadership* mean to you? (See *What is Spiritual Leadership, and What Does Spiritual Leadership Look Like?*, page xiii)

Have you ever thought about yourself as the spiritual leader of your family? If so, what does spiritual leadership mean to you? If not, why do you think you haven't considered yourself to be a spiritual leader? (See *What is Spiritual Leadership, and What Does Spiritual Leadership Look Like?* and *Refocusing on Spiritual Leadership in Modern Family Life*, pages xiv-xvii)

Do you see the differences and complementarity between you and your spouse's role in your family life? In what ways do you use your masculine or feminine gifts to lead or love your family? (See *What is Spiritual Leadership, and What Does Spiritual Leadership Look Like?* xiv-xvi)

Do you consider sanctity (becoming a saint, being holy, getting to heaven) to be your primary focus in life? How does this goal shape your decisions, actions, and life overall? If you haven't prioritized sanctity in your life, what do you consider to be your current priorities in life and in your family? (See *Refocusing on Spiritual Leadership in Modern Family Life* and *The Leadership Characteristic That Ties Them All Together* pages xvi-xvii; xviii-xix)

Chapter One: They Fulfill Unique, Complementary Roles

Why do you think that some in our culture want to ignore the differences between the "head" and the "heart" of the family, between men and women? Why do you think acknowledging the uniqueness of men and women is so important for families? (See *Head and Heart*, page 3)

The Catechism of the Catholic Church states: "*Physical, moral, and spiritual difference and complementarity are oriented toward the goods of marriage and the flourishing of family life*" (2333). How do you think the physical, moral, and spiritual differences and complementarity between you and your spouse enrich your marriage

and help your family flourish? Give examples of both differences and complementarity and consider physical, moral, and spiritual components. (See *Made to Complement*, pages 4-7)

In what ways can you practically apply the teaching from Ephesians 5 in your marriage and spiritual leadership? (Eph 5: 21-33; See *Leadership in Subjection*, pages 7-8)

What was your background in faith like before you met your spouse? How did this shape your understanding of spiritual leadership or impact your application of spiritual leadership in your marriage and family? (See *Spiritual Leadership and the Bonding of Souls*, pages 10-12)

What aspects of spiritual headship (if you are a man/husband/father) or spiritual heartship (if you are a woman/wife/mother) resonate with you most? Which trait(s) do you feel you possess most strongly, and which do you wish to become better at? (See *Portrait of a Spiritual Head* and *Portrait of a Spiritual Heart*, pages 12-15)

Which leadership action step do you plan to execute as an individual or couple? Commit to an action step and come up with a plan to complete it. (See *Your Leadership Action Steps*, pages 17-18)

Chapter 2: They Have a Mission

Have you thought about missions as something families should have or are missions, mission statements, goals and objectives something you associated specifically with business? Why? (See *Toward Intentionality* and *A Culture of Mission-less Families*, pages 19-21)

Did you know that the mission of the Catholic Church is to evangelize? How do you and your family participate in that mission? (See *The Mission of the Largest Family You Know* and *The Mission of Each Catholic Family*, pages 22-24).

How do you think having a mission will both challenge and help your family? (See *Seeking Sanctity First, Your Mission: The Foundation on Which Leadership is Built*, and *Spiritual Heads and Hearts Have a Mission*, pages 24-26, 30-31).

Which leadership action step do you plan to execute as an individual or couple? Commit to an action step and come up with a plan to complete it. (See *Your Leadership Action Steps*, page 32)

Chapter Three: They Have Strong Marriages

Have you noticed the ways in which the devil tries to attack your marriage? Think of some examples. (See *A Union That Glorifies God* and *In the Beginning...*, pages 33-35)

Why do you think the strength of your marriage impacts your spiritual leadership? (See *Your Choice: What Kind of Marriage Do You Want to Have?* pages 35-38)

What marriage-building habits and behaviors do you and your spouse already practice? Which ones do you need to work on more in your marriage? (See *A Strong Marriage: The Foundation of Family Spiritual Leadership*, pages 38-41).

How do you and your spouse currently view conflict in marriage: frustrating, challenging in a positive way, as an opportunity for growth...? In what ways can you begin to use moments of conflict to your advantage? (See *Conflict is How Leaders Are Made*, pages 43-46)

Which leadership action step do you plan to execute as an individual or couple? Commit to an action step and come up with a plan to complete it. (See *Your Leadership Action Steps*, pages 48-49)

Chapter Four: They Prioritize Prayer

What role does prayer play in your life and in your family? What does your individual, couple, and family prayer life look like/consist of? (See *The Genius of St. Therese's Prayer Philosophy*, pages 51-52, but pull mostly from personal experience)

Do you view your prayer life as a battle? In what ways? How do you work to overcome obstacles to prayer? (See *Portrait of a Praying Heart: Prayer as a Battle*, pages 52-54).

Which reasons for prayer do you find most motivating? (See *A Family That Prays Together...Is a Family Led By Strong Spiritual Leaders*, pages 54-56).

How do you feel about the different methods and forms of prayer within the Church's "arsenal" of prayers? Which types of prayer are you most comfortable with, and which are you interested in integrating more into your prayer life? (See *The Church's Arsenal of Prayers*, pages 56-58, and the *Appendix*, pages 129-130).

How and when can you make time to pray each day? (See *Portrait of a Praying Head: Entering into Vulnerability* and *The Fundamental First And Last Minutes*, pages 58-61)

How can prayer be a gift to your spouse and family? (See *A Spiritual Sign of Love*, pages 61-64)

Which leadership action step do you plan to execute as an individual or couple? Commit to an action step and come up with a plan to complete it. (See *Your Leadership Action Steps*, pages 65-66)

Chapter Five: They Make the Home a School of Virtue and Culture

Why are virtues so important to teach, rather than solely values? Why is it so important to model virtue as a spiritual leader? (See *Education in the Virtues: A Lost Art of Leadership* and *Virtue: The Stuff Leaders Are Made Of*, pages 67-69)

What is a cardinal virtue? Which cardinal virtue do you believe is most important for you to cultivate as a spiritual leader right now? (See *A School of Cardinal Virtues: Acquired by Human Effort*, pages 69-70)

What is a theological virtue? Which theological virtue do you believe is most important for you to cultivate as a spiritual leader right now? (See *A School of Theological Virtues: The Greatest of These is Love*, pages 71-72)

What are some ways in which you can take advantage of ordinary opportunities and moments for growth in virtue in day-to-day life with your spouse and kids? (See *Seeking Ordinary Opportunities and Moments for Growth*, pages 72-73)

Which of the three steps of growing in virtue seems most challenging to you and why? (See *A Simple But Not-So-Easy Three-Step Process for Growing in Virtue*, pages 74-75)

Do you celebrate spiritual occasions (baptism days, feast days, etc.) with the same excitement, regularity, and planning as you celebrate other occasions (birthdays, secular holidays, etc.)? Why or why not? (See *Infusing Family Life with Christian Culture*, pages 78-79)

What are some things you can do to make your home a place where holiness can grow? (See *Creating an Environment Where Holiness Can Grow*, pages 79-81)

Which leadership action step do you plan to execute as an individual or couple? Commit to an action step and come up with a plan to complete it. (See *Your Leadership Action Steps*, pages 82-83)

Chapter Six: They Take Up Their Cross

How do you handle suffering in your personal and family life? In what ways do you lean on your faith to help you through difficult times? (See *Special Needs, Special Leadership, Take Up Your Cross and Follow Me*, and *Spiritual Heads and Hearts Take Up Their Cross and Follow Christ* pages 86-89, 95)

Do you regularly “offer up” your sufferings? How do you think this practice would affect the way you view your crosses? Which of the three things mentioned that spiritual leaders do to “offer up” their sufferings sounds most appealing to you to incorporate in your life right now? (See *Offering it Up*, pages 89-91)

How can couples without children in the home be strong spiritual leaders for each other and for others? (Read “*I Just Wish God Didn’t Trust Me So Much!*” pages 89-93)

What are some things you can do to help other people carry their crosses? (See *What God Did When I Thought My Crosses Were Too Small*, pages 93-94)

Which leadership action step do you plan to execute as an individual or couple? Commit to an action step and come up with a plan to complete it. (See *Your Leadership Action Steps*, page 97)

Chapter Seven: They Cultivate Peace

Do you consider yourself to be a peaceful person who lives a peaceful personal and family life? Why or why not? (See *Is Peace Still A ‘Thing’ In Our Society?* pages 99-102)

In what areas in your life can you “downsize and simplify” to make more room for peace in whatever stage and place in life you find yourself in? (See *Downsize and Simplify*, pages 100-103, and *Peace Can Live Wherever Your Family Is*, pages 105-108)

Is honoring the Lord’s Day—keeping Sundays a holy time for worship, rest, and time spent with loved ones—a priority in your family? What things do you allow to get in the way of observing Sunday as a holy day? (See *Honoring the Lord’s Day: The Foundation of Personal and Family Peace*, pages 102-104)

What are some things you can do to “keep holy the Lord’s Day” in your home? How do you think these habits will affect your personal and family peace? (See *Honoring the Lord’s Day: The Foundation of Personal and Family Peace*, pages 104-105)

What are some things that destroy your peace? What are some things that help restore it or build it up? (See *Peace Destroyers and Builders for Spiritual Leadership*, pages 108-110)

Which leadership action step do you plan to execute as an individual or couple? Commit to an action step and come up with a plan to complete it. (See *Your Leadership Action Steps*, pages 112-113)

Chapter Eight: Becoming the Leader God Made You To Be

Do you see your spiritual leadership and your task of leading you and your family toward heaven as something in which sole responsibility rests on you? How can you reframe your thinking so as to recognize and appreciate God’s grace helping you in your effort to spiritually lead your family? (See *Placing Everything in the Hands of God and Not Ours*, pages 115-117)

What impact do you believe your spiritual leadership can have on your children? (See *Turning Drifting Youth into Strong Spiritual Leaders*, pages 118-120)

How does your family impact your growth in holiness in spiritual leadership? Think of examples of ways your spouse and children inspire you to become a more faithful Catholic and a more loving, Christ-like person. (See *Story of a Family* and *By Way of the Family*, pages 120-121, 123-124)

How do you believe examining your spiritual leadership will impact your growth as the spiritual head or spiritual heart of your family? (See *Examination of Spiritual Leadership*, pages 121-123)

Epilogue: Spiritual Leaders Learn and Teach the Faith

Do you *talk* about your faith at home with your family? Do you see discussions with your family about what you believe as Catholics as critical to your role as a spouse, parent, and spiritual leader, or do you rely on your parish or Catholic school to teach your family about the Catholic faith? (See *Epilogue*, pages 125-126, but also answer primarily based on personal experience)

Do you spend regular time learning more about your Catholic faith? (Do you read books about Catholicism, visit Catholic websites, watch or listen to Catholic TV or radio programming, participate in parish faith formation programs?) (See *Epilogue*, pages 125-126, but also answer primarily based on personal experience)

Which resources on the list in the Epilogue can you commit to referencing to help you better learn and teach the faith? (See *Epilogue*, pages 126-128)