
FUN, PLEASURE, & FAITH⁴

Summary

Opening Prayer

Introduction: Based on recent sociological research, play comes after school and work in most young adults' list of priorities. The famous Catholic writer Thomas Merton once told an audience that human beings can't live without beauty—even if the only pleasure they had on a given day came from making their beds after rising (and consequently enjoying the beauty of a well ordered room).

Questions for Tables (small group discussion):

- Beyond our own human nature, what social forces do you think drive us to seek pleasure?
- What do you like to do for fun?
- What is one pleasure you can't live without?
- What boundaries or limits do you place on pleasure?
- Describe or share one of the most fun, joyous, pleasurable, or enjoyable experiences you've ever had.
- How would you explain ascetic practices of the Church, such as fasting or saving sex for marriage, to those who wrongly think that the Church is against pleasure?

Concluding remarks, summarizing table discussions and possibly including the value of moderation in the enjoyment of God's gifts (alcohol, food, etc.), the rhythm of fast and feast in our liturgical life, and the extending the idea that human beings cannot live without pleasure—it's just a question of what pleasure we choose. The facilitator should invite the group to generate other questions, based on his/her presentation and building on the others.

Closing Prayer

Evaluation

⁴ See *Fun & Joy*, by Rev. Fr. Stanley Harakas
