"An essential read for any minister who is trying to reclaim truth as a fundamental human and explicitly Christian value." **Theresa Rickard, O.P.** President of RENEW International

LET'S TALK ABOUT

A Guide for Preachers, Teachers, and Other Catholic Leaders in a World of Doubt and Discord



HANDOUTS TO ACCOMPANY THE LESSON PLANS AND TEACHER ANSWER KEYS

Exercises in Reason: Session 3

Challenge #1 Eight people are sitting around a round table facing inwards. Alex is two seats to Sophie's left. Adam is three seats to Alex's right. Michelle is two seats to Alex's left. Juan is six seats to Lucia's right. Edward is six seats to Juan's right.Miguel is not sitting next to Alex. Who sits one seat to Edward's left?

Challenge #2 In a park where no hunting is allowed, a deer population of 400 deer can sustain a wolf pack of 50 wolves with the ratio of deer to wolves being maintained. If the deer increase to 600, how many wolves could be sustained?

Challenge #3

You take a 1200 mile trip to Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, Canada for the big annual powwow.

a) How much time will you save on the 1200 mile trip if you average 60 mph compared to averaging 50 mph._____

b) If your car gets 25 mpg at 60 mph but increases to 30 mpg at 50 mph, how many gallons of gas would you save on the 1200 mile trip at the lower speed? If gas costs \$2.10 a gallon, how much money do you save?

c) Is the saving in time at 60 mph worth the extra cost? _____

The new VW Jetta diesel has an EPA highway rating of 41 mpg. You plan to make a summer trip from Green Bay, Wisconsin to Los Angeles, a distance of 2172 miles.

a)Since this will be mostly highway driving, how many gallons of diesel will you need for the whole trip, there and back ______

b) If diesel costs an average of \$2.25 a gallon, what will be the total fuel cost of the whole trip?

c) Instead of taking the VW, you think it might be cheaper to drive a Honda Civic to LA since gasoline is cheaper and costs only \$2.10 a gallon. However, the Honda gets lower gas mileage at 34 mpg. How much would it cost for fuel for the whole trip if you took the Honda?

d) Which car is more economical? What is the savings in fuel costs using this car?

Exercises in Reason Answer Key: Session 3

Challenge #1: Michael

(Thanks to https://www.wikijob.co.uk/content/aptitude-tests/test-types/deductivereasoning-tests#sample-questions)

Challenge #2:

Proportion problem. 400/50 = 600/w w = 75 wolves (Thanks to: Dr. Gerald Fast http://www.uwosh.edu/coehs/cmagproject/many_word/index.htm)

Challenge #3:

You take a 1200 mile trip to Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, Canada for the big annual powwow.

a) How much time will you save on the 1200 mile trip if and you average 60 mph compared to averaging 50 mph. At 60 mph the trip will take (1200 \div 60) hours. 1200 \div 60 = 20 hours. At 50 mph the trip will take (1200 \div 50) hours. 1200 \div 50 = 24 hours. So the time saved at 60 mph is (24 – 20) hours. 24 – 20 = 4 hours. So at 60 mph you saved 4 hours compared to traveling at 50 mph.

b) If your car gets 25 mpg at 60 mph but increases to 30 mpg at 50 mph, how many gallons of gas would you save on the 1200 mile trip at the lower speed? If gas costs 2.10 a gallon, how much money do you save? At 25 mpg you would need (1200 ÷ 25) gallons of gas. 1200 ÷ 25 = 48 gallons. At 30 mpg you would need (1200 ÷ 30) gallons of gas. 1200 ÷ 30 = 40 gallons. So you would save (48 – 40) gallons = 8 gallons. If gas costs 2.10 a gallons, you would save (8 x \$2.10) = \$16.80

c) Is the saving in time at 60 mph worth the extra cost? It depends how you look at it. You are saving \$16.80 at the slower speed but it is taking you 4 hours longer to make the trip. Any reasonable answer is acceptable. (We'll discuss this response more in the follow up) (Thank you to Dr. Gerald Fast

http://www.uwosh.edu/coehs/cmagproject/many_word/index.htm)

Bonus Challenge #4:

The new VW Jetta diesel has an EPA highway rating of 41 mpg. You plan to make a summer trip from Green Bay, Wisconsin to Los Angeles, a distance of 2172 miles.

a) Since this will be mostly highway driving, how many gallons of diesel will you need for the whole trip, there and back? The total distance there and back will be 2 x 2172 miles which is 4344 miles. At 41 mpg, the VW will need (4344 \div 41) gallons of diesel. 4344 \div 41 = 105.95 gallons approximately.

b) If diesel costs an average of \$2.25 a gallon, what will be the total fuel cost of the whole trip?

Rounding the answer in a) to 106 gallons, the cost would be 106 x \$2.25 = \$238.50

c) Instead of taking the VW, you think it might be cheaper to drive a Honda Civic to LA since gasoline is cheaper and costs only \$2.10 a gallon. However the Honda gets lower gas mileage at 34 mpg. How much would it cost for fuel for the whole trip if you took the Honda? 4344 miles \div 34 mpg = 127.76 gallons approximately. Round this to 128 gallons. So the cost would be 128 x \$2.10 = \$268.80

d) Which car is more economical? What is the savings in fuel costs using this car? The VW is more economical. You save (\$268.80 – 238.50) = \$30.30 with the VW.

Thank you to Dr.Gerald Fast http://www.uwosh.edu/coehs/cmagproject/many_word/index.htm

Fact or Judgment?: Session 4

Determine whether each of the following statements, *if true*, would convey a fact or a judgment by writing an "F" or "J" to the left of the number. Be prepared to share how you arrived at your decision. Note: the goal here is not to assess the truthfulness of the statement but whether it fits into the category of fact or judgment.

_____1. Bill and Melinda gates have three children.

_____ 2. We should not be building a wall between the US and Mexico if only because of the environmental devastation it will cause.

_____ 3. Abortion is the gravest sin.

______ 4. The fact of the matter is that unless we start treating LGBTQ issues seriously, many young people will exit the church.

_____ 5. The crowd gathered on the National Mall at Donald Trump's inauguration was the largest in history.

_____ 6. Really, there are only eight planets orbiting the sun.

_____ 7. All white people are racist.

_____ 8. The Nokia 1100 and 1110 models have sold more than any other mobile phone models in the last 20 years, including Apple.

_____ 9. Bill and Melinda Gates really have five children.

_____10. Truthfully, there should be a law against gambling.

_____11. Instagram is a better platform for young people.

_____12. More young people are on Instagram than on Facebook.

_____ 13. The Loving vs. Virginia decision in 1967 made it legal for people from other countries to marry one another and get US citizenship.

_____ 14. 2016 is the warmest year on record globally.

_____ 15. Facebook has a worse problem with hate speech than Reddit.

Fact or Judgment? Answer Key

Explanatory note: Students are likely to have difficulty understanding this concept. Sometimes they will think that if it is "correct" then it is a fact and if it is "wrong" then it is a judgment. The point of this exercise is to note that fact and judgment are different categories and that to assess the truthfulness of a fact requires a different set of skills than to assess the truthfulness of a judgment. It is possible for something to be factually true or untrue (based on its accuracy or inaccuracy). It is also possible for a judgment to be true or untrue (but based on a different set of qualifiers.) Before we can even begin to decide whether something is true or not, we need to know in what category we are making that assessment.

So, for example, the Gateses cannot have both three children and five children. One of these statements is clearly factually inaccurate. But in order to determine which is accurate (if either) we would use the skills necessary to determine facticity.... Not those used to assess judgments. A key point you will want to highlight: Saying something is a "fact" or "reality" does not necessarily put it into the category of fact.

_____1. Bill and Melinda gates have three children. FACT

_____ 2. We should not be building a wall between the US and Mexico if only because of the environmental devastation it will cause. **JUDGMENT**

_____ 3. Abortion is the gravest sin. JUDGMENT

_____ 4. The fact of the matter is that unless we start treating LGBTQ issues seriously, many young people will exit the church. **JUDGMENT**

_____ 5. The crowd gathered on the National Mall at Donald Trump's inauguration was the largest in history. **FACT**

_____ 6. Really, there are only eight planets orbiting the sun. FACT

_____ 7. All white people are racist. JUDGMENT

_____ 8. The Nokia 1100 and 1110 models have sold more than any other mobile phone models in the last 20 years, including Apple. **FACT**

_____ 9. Bill and Melinda Gates really have five children. FACT

_____10. Truthfully, there should be a law against gambling. JUDGMENT

_____11. Instagram is a better platform for young people. **JUDGMENT**

_____12. More young people are on Instagram than on Facebook. FACT

_____ 13. The Loving vs. Virginia decision in 1967 made it legal for people from other countries to marry one another and get US citizenship. **FACT**

_____ 14. 2016 is the warmest year on record globally. FACT

_____ 15. Facebook has a worse problem with hate speech than Reddit. JUDGMENT

Renewing the Mind: Session 5

Romans 12:1-2

I urge you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God, your spiritual worship. Do not conform yourselves to this age but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and pleasing and perfect.

A renewal of the mind. That is what an engineer named Max was after when he left his job at Google a few years back.

I learned about Max from a podcast. Apparently Max loved his job. Loved life in San Francisco. Loved the people he worked with. But as the months passed, Max began to realize that he was living in a "bubble." He was only meeting others who shared his experiences and reinforced his views. He decided that in order to broaden his perspective, he would design an app that would send him to random public events posted on Facebook, allowing him to meet and talk with people he would never otherwise encounter. The app took him to a gathering of young Russian professionals, a pancake breakfast, a salsa-dancing event, and even Christmas dinner at a stranger's home. Max admitted it could be incredibly awkward to go where the app sent him. After all, he didn't know anyone there. Sometimes it took him places where he didn't exactly feel safe, such as a biker bar on the side of a rural highway. But he would go in open-minded—not there to judge, just to meet people wherever they were at. It turned out that the experience was so enriching, he eventually quit his job to devote two years of his life to following where the app might take him across the country. He also began to share the app with others so that they could join in the experiences of others and introduced them to very different activities than they would have otherwise enjoyed. Turns out bocce ball is super fun.

"Bubble-Hopping (Reality Part

Two)," Invisibilia, June 8, 2017, https://www.npr.org/2017/06/08/531905309/reality-part-two. See also the follow-up to this episode, "Bonus: Catch-Up with Max Hawkins," December 22, 2017, https://www.npr.org/2017/12/22/572696073/bonus-catch-up-with-max-hawkins. Max's app is available at https://findrandomevents.com. Bubbles were bursting all over the place. And as I was listening to the podcast, I found myself really admiring Max. One of the things the 2016 election illumined for so many of us was how small our bubbles are—how we only talk to people who are like us. We have few interracial friendships, few interreligious friendships. We know so little about other parts of the country, much less the world. Max struck me as someone who, in St. Paul's words, wasn't conforming himself to the age but open to transformation. I was thinking maybe I should get Max's app and try it out myself.

The original podcast telling Max's story, however, was followed by a second episode, recorded several months later. And this one complicated matters. Apparently sometimes the app—with its design for randomness—was sending users to some profoundly uncomfortable places. One user described a time that Max's app sent her to an event billed as a "midget wrestling strip club," or as she described it in her own words, a "trifecta of exploitation." She wanted to be open to stretching experiences and getting outside of her bubble. She didn't want to be close-minded. At the same time, even being present at such an event evoked a deep discomfort within her. Did attending demonstrate an admirable curiosity about the wider world or did it cross over into the realm of what the Fathers of the Church deride as curiositas—a lurid, seedy curiosity? By paying the cover charge to get into the event, was she supporting the ongoing existence of such venues?

Max and his friends were forced to ask, "Are there limits to how much we should be willing to bubble hop?" Are there worlds that we simply should not entertain? Is being neutral and open-minded always the way to go? What should we do about the deep discomfort we sometimes feel? Yes, sometimes it's just because the situation we're in is socially awkward; sometimes it's telling us to be attentive to our safety; but sometimes, might it also be something more? The English writer G. K. Chesterton was known to quip, "An open mind is something like the open mouth, designed to bite down on something solid." Maybe open-mindedness is not really meant to be a permanent stance in life but a step in a bigger journey?

The renewal of mind that St. Paul talks about seems to say so. He doesn't just say to undergo a renewal of mind but to undergo a renewal of mind so that you'll be able to "discern what is the will of God" or, in other words, to discern "what is good and pleasing and perfect." (The will of God and the good are the same thing.)

The renewal of mind that Paul seems to be talking about is what now we might call renewal of conscience—a deeper listening to that voice inside of each of us, nudging us in the direction of what is good and away from what is evil. The voice that says, "Do this . . . Avoid that." Just like reason is a God-given capacity to help figure out what's real, conscience is a God-given capacity to help figure out what's real, conscience is a God-given capacity to help figure out what's real, conscience is a God-given capacity to help figure out what's real, conscience is a God-given capacity to help figure out what's real, conscience is a God-given capacity to help figure out what's good. And, like reason, conscience is not just for Christians. Everyone has a conscience. And it's important that we listen to it and not turn it off in the effort of being open-minded. Because while we don't necessarily want to avoid doing things just because they might be awkward, or even just because they make us nervous, we do still want to avoid things that aren't good for us or the wider world.

When people ignore the voice of reason, we end up with things such as the Flat Earth Society or climate change denial. When people ignore the voice of conscience, we end up with things such as the Holocaust.

"Bonus: Catch-Up with Max Hawkins." G. K. Chesterton, quoted by Bishop Robert Barron, "Looking for the Nones," YouTube video, 1:04:22, March 7, 2018, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tuQq3nn15ZE. We open our minds not just for the sake of having open minds. We open our minds in order to search for the "good and pleasing and perfect." And we can only do that if we are guided by conscience. So, rather than turn that voice off while on our bubblebursting adventures, we actually want to pay more attention to it. To develop it. To feed it. To nurture it—with the wisdom of the ages, with Church teaching, with sage counsel. (The good news is you don't have to figure everything out all by yourself!) We tend to the conscience so that in whatever random direction the app of life takes us, we only enter an experience, a relationship, an event to the degree that it serves good.

Max's friend says she stood outside the strip club for a while and decided to go in, but she left after only an hour. Indeed, she saw things she'd never seen before, but they were things she knew no one should see. We can't live totally judgment-free lives and simultaneously hope for a more just world. "You have to acknowledge," she said at the end of the podcast, "that sometimes standing up does mean closing off."

"Bonus: Catch-Up with Max Hawkins."

Catechism of the Catholic Church and Lying

THE EIGHTH COMMANDMENT

You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor. 2 It was said to the men of old, "You shall not swear falsely, but shall perform to the Lord what you have sworn."

2464

The eighth commandment forbids misrepresenting the truth in our relations with others. This moral prescription flows from the vocation of the holy people to bear witness to their God who is the truth and wills the truth. Offenses against the truth express by word or deed a refusal to commit oneself to moral uprightness: they are fundamental infidelities to God and, in this sense, they undermine the foundations of the covenant.

I. Living in the Truth

2468 Truth as uprightness in human action and speech is called truthfulness, sincerity, or candor. Truth or truthfulness is the virtue which consists in showing oneself true in deeds and truthful in words, and in guarding against duplicity, dissimulation, and hypocrisy.

2469 "Men could not live with one another if there were not mutual confidence that they were being truthful to one another." The virtue of truth gives another his just due. Truthfulness keeps to the just mean between what ought to be expressed and what ought to be kept secret: it entails honesty and discretion. In justice, "as a matter of honor, one man owes it to another to manifest the truth."



"Lying is the most direct offense against the truth." -CCC #2483

III. Offenses Against Truth

2482

"A lie consists in speaking a falsehood with the intention of deceiving."

2483

Lying is the most direct offense against the truth. To lie is to speak or act against the truth in order to lead into error someone who has the right to know the truth. By injuring man's relation to truth and to his neighbor, a lie offends against the fundamental relation of man and of his word to the Lord.

2485

By its very nature, lying is to be condemned. It is a profanation of speech, whereas the purpose of speech is to communicate known truth to others. The deliberate intention of leading a neighbor into error by saying things contrary to the truth constitutes a failure in justice and charity. The culpability is greater when the intention of deceiving entails the risk of deadly consequences for those who are led astray.

2486

Since it violates the virtue of truthfulness, a lie does real violence to another. It affects his ability to know, which is a condition of every judgment and decision. It contains the seed of discord and all consequent evils. Lying is destructive of society; it undermines trust among men and tears apart the fabric of social relationships.

2487

Every offense committed against justice and truth entails the duty of reparation, even if its author has been forgiven. When it is impossible publicly to make reparation for a wrong, it must be made secretly...It obliges in conscience.

Catechism of the Catholic Church and How Much Truth to Tell

III. Offenses Against Truth

2477

Respect for the reputation of persons forbids every attitude and word likely to cause them unjust injury. He becomes guilty:

- of rash judgment who, even tacitly, assumes as true, without sufficient foundation, the moral fault of a neighbor;

- of detraction who, without objectively valid reason, discloses another's faults and failings to persons who did not know them;

- of calumny who, by remarks contrary to the truth, harms the reputation of others and gives occasion for false judgments concerning them.

2478

To avoid rash judgment, everyone should be careful to interpret insofar as possible his neighbor's thoughts, words, and deeds in a favorable way:

Every good Christian ought to be more ready to give a favorable interpretation to another's statement than to condemn it. But if he cannot do so, let him ask how the other understands it. and if the latter understands it badly, let the former correct him with love. If that does not suffice, let the Christian try all suitable ways to bring the other to a correct interpretation so that he may be saved.

2479

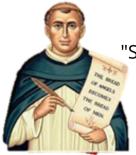
Detraction and calumny destroy the reputation and honor of one's neighbor. Honor is the social witness given to human dignity, and everyone enjoys a natural right to the honor of his name and reputation and to respect. Thus, detraction and calumny offend against the virtues of justice and charity.

2480

Every word or attitude is forbidden which by flattery, adulation, or complaisance encourages and confirms another in malicious acts and perverse conduct. Adulation is a grave fault if it makes one an accomplice in another's vices or grave sins. Neither the desire to be of service nor friendship justifies duplicitous speech.

2481

Boasting or bragging is an offense against truth. So is irony aimed at disparaging someone by maliciously caricaturing some aspect of his behavior.



"Since it violates the virtue of truthfulness, a lie does real violence to another." - CCC #2486

IV. Respect for the Truth

2488

The right to the communication of the truth is not unconditional. Everyone must conform his life to the Gospel precept of fraternal love. This requires us in concrete situations to judge whether or not it is appropriate to reveal the truth to someone who asks for it.

2489

Charity and respect for the truth should dictate the response to every request for information or communication. The good and safety of others, respect for privacy, and the common good are sufficient reasons for being silent about what ought not be known or for making use of a discreet language. The duty to avoid scandal often commands strict discretion. No one is bound to reveal the truth to someone who does not have the right to know it.

2492

Everyone should observe an appropriate reserve concerning persons' private lives. Those in charge of communications should maintain a fair balance between the requirements of the common good and respect for individual rights. Interference by the media in the private lives of persons engaged in political or public activity is to be condemned to the extent that it infringes upon their privacy and freedom.

V. The Use of the Social Communications Media

2493

Within modern society the communications media play a major role in information, cultural promotion, and formation. This role is increasing, as a result of technological progress, the extent and diversity of the news transmitted, and the influence exercised on public opinion.

2494

The information provided by the media is at the service of the common good. Society has a right to information based on truth, freedom, justice, and solidarity:

The proper exercise of this right demands that the content of the communication be true and - within the limits set by justice and charity - complete. Further, it should be communicated honestly and properly. This means that in the gathering and in the publication of news, the moral law and the legitimate rights and dignity of man should be upheld.

2495

"It is necessary that all members of society meet the demands of justice and charity in this domain. They should help, through the means of social communication, in the formation and diffusion of sound public opinion." Solidarity is a consequence of genuine and right communication and the free circulation of ideas that further knowledge and respect for others.



"The Right to the communication of the truth is not unconditional. Everyone must conform his life to the Gospel precept of fraternal love." -CCC #2488

2496

The means of social communication (especially the mass media) can give rise to a certain passivity among users, making them less than vigilant consumers of what is said or shown. Users should practice moderation and discipline in their approach to the mass media. They will want to form enlightened and correct consciences the more easily to resist unwholesome influences.

2497

By the very nature of their profession, journalists have an obligation to serve the truth and not offend against charity in disseminating information. They should strive to respect, with equal care, the nature of the facts and the limits of critical judgment concerning individuals. They should not stoop to defamation.

2498

"Civil authorities have particular responsibilities in this field because of the common good.... It is for the civil authority ... to defend and safeguard a true and just freedom of information." By promulgating laws and overseeing their application, public authorities should ensure that "public morality and social progress are not gravely endangered" through misuse of the media. Civil authorities should punish any violation of the rights of individuals to their reputation and privacy. They should give timely and reliable reports concerning the general good or respond to the well-founded concerns of the people. Nothing can justify recourse to disinformation for manipulating public opinion through the media. Interventions by public authority should avoid injuring the freedom of individuals or groups.



"By the very nature of their profession, journalists have an obligation to serve the truth and not offend against charity in disseminating information" – CCC #2497

Truth Scenarios - Session 10

Directions:

Consider each of the following scenarios and decide what it would look like to "live truth" in the situation. Is this a scenario where one needs to "seek truth," "speak truthfully," and/or "be true"? Don't feel you need to limit yourself to choosing just one! You may be able to argue for all three.) How would you coach the person involved drawing on the conversations we've had during the previous nine sessions. Note that as a coach you don't need to come up with an answer for the person, but rather can just point them in the right direction for figuring out how to arrive at their own answer. What tools / resources could the person use to think through their response?

Scenario 1:

Tien's daughter, Lam, had her first wiggly tooth and was nervous about losing it. She cried when anyone tried to touch it, even as it hung by a thread. To persuade Lam to let him pull the thing out, Tien promised the tooth fairy would come that night and bring her a dollar which she could put toward purchasing the toy she wanted. Lam gave in. That night as Tien snuck in to her room to put the dollar under her pillow, Lam rolled over and turned a flash light into his face. "I knew it," she said, "There is no tooth fairy. You lied to me."

SEEK TRUTH	SPEAK TRUTHFULLY	BE TRUE
How?	How?	How?

Scenario 2:

Amber has been excited about the coming national election because it will be the first time she is able to vote. She has registered already and, at the encouragement of her civics teacher, has been following more of the news on Twitter to keep informed on the issues she considers most relevant. Her grandparents with whom she lives are news junkies, spending large swaths of time watching cable news while they are more housebound. They express strong political opinions that contradict Amber's perspective, especially around issues related to race and policing. In the past, Amber has told them that they have it wrong, but this hasn't gone well. The more she brings the topic up, the more argumentative they become. She feels that the truth of what is going on is being entirely dismissed.

SEEK TRUTH	SPEAK TRUTHFULLY	BE TRUE
How?	How?	How?

Scenario 3:

Elijah belongs to an ecumenical youth group that includes teens from a number of local churches. One of the commitments of the group is to respect each other's beliefs. Indeed, most of what they do together is community service and eat pizza. When together they don't talk much Bible except. On Facebook, however, one of the other teens, Marisa, constantly shares links to stories that promote creationism and debate evolution. She challenges friends (who include many members of the youth group) not to fall prey to the claims of scientists, most of whom are atheists. Elijah can see that fellow youth group members often thank Marisa for posting what she posts and sometimes share the links on their own pages.

SEEK TRUTH	SPEAK TRUTHFULLY	BE TRUE
How?	How?	How?

Scenario 4

Arokia and her cousin Max grew up in the same neighborhood and as children spent lots of time together, both in school and out. When they were little, she knew Max didn't interact like the other kids, but most of the time, it didn't really matter. He rarely looked her in the eye. He didn't speak until he was four. He often did his own thing. When they were eight, Arokia's mom explained that Max had Autism Spectrum Disorder and that he didn't process things in the same way. She asked Arokia to watch out for him at school. Arokia did. She stood up for Max when she saw him being bullied. She sat next to him at lunch. But once they got into middle school, it got tougher. Sometimes Max could be so blunt that it was hurtful. When she was with friends, he would often walk up and interrupt the conversation. Freshman year of high school, he got a crush on one of Arokia's friends—Emma—and would not stop talking about her; would not stop texting her; would not stop bringing her small gifts. Even after Emma made clear that she was not interested, Max would not back off. Emma is now so frustrated she has told Arokia she "wants to get a restraining order against Max."

SEEK TRUTH	SPEAK TRUTHFULLY	BE TRUE
How?	How?	How?