



## Episode I – Introduction Seven Deadly Sins

**\*{Start with reviewing the previous Meetings Challenge or discuss prior to sharing this week's challenge.}**

**Let's Begin:** Think about how the challenge went for the last session. What went well? What was difficult?

### **Opening Prayer:**

Begin with a brief moment of silence shaking off any and all distractions or difficulties of the day and remembering that God is always with us.

Read: **Philippians 4:8**

After the Reading Conclude with this prayer:

*Heavenly Father, You have made us for Yourself and call us to the high demands of authentic love. As we embark on this series, may we further discover how we can love more intensely and discover the areas in our lives where we fail to love as we ought. We ask this all in Jesus' name. Amen.*

**Video:** Seven Deadly Sins, Seven Lively Virtues Video: Episode I - Introduction

### **Reflection or Discussion Questions:**

1. For the next 8 sessions we will utilize this series by Bishop Barron on the Deadly Sins and Virtues. What do you think/feel about this topic?
2. Did anything said in this first video resonate with you or truly strike you? Why?
3. "God does not need you," can sound rather off-putting or even startling. What is your initial reaction to this truth?
4. Bishop Barron mentions that love is defined as, "to will the good of the other as other." This definition can sound strange to the modern ear, when we typically consider love as an emotion or feeling. How does Bishop Barron's definition of love challenge you?
5. "Fear, not hate is the opposite of Love." What do you think of this statement?
6. Bishop Barron defines deadly sins as, "negative attitudes, distortions of the spirit that keep us from being alive." He goes on to say that, "all God wants is our flourishing and that is why God is angry with the deadly sins." Does this change how you view/understand sin?

### **Session Challenges:**

- If you don't already do so; make an examination of conscience each evening before going to bed. Reflecting on the day and any sins committed. In this way, you become more intentionally aware of those sins that you repeat, and which drag you down.

**Closing Prayer:** (Leaders: We recommended offering time during the closing prayer for participants to offer personal intentions.)

Close with 7 Hail Marys' asking our Blessed Mother to intercede for us as we reflect with each deadly sin and lively virtue.

**{Optional additional Readings}** Catechism of the Catholic Church: 759, 1849-1851, 1866



## Episode II – Pride and Humility

**\*{Start with reviewing the previous Meetings Challenge or discuss prior to sharing this week's challenge.}**

**Let's Begin:** Think about how the challenge went for the last session. What went well? What was difficult?

### **Opening Prayer:**

Begin with a brief moment of silence shaking off any and all distractions or difficulties of the day and remembering that God is always with us.

Read: **Philippians 2:1-11**

After the Reading Conclude with this prayer:

*Heavenly Father, please give us humble hearts and minds. Help us to put off all prideful ways and remember always that YOU are God and we are not. Amen.*

**Video:** Seven Deadly Sins, Seven Lively Virtues Video: Episode II – Pride and Humility

### **Reflection or Discussion Questions:**

1. Did anything said in today's video resonate with you or truly strike you? Why?
2. Bishop Barron describes the sin of Pride as making yourself, your plans and projects, your will and desires god rather than acknowledging God as God. He then calls this "Boring." What do you think/feel about this?
3. Bishop Barron references the psychological aspect of Pride as, "always watching oneself as from outside oneself and negatively self-aware." I am sure we can all appreciate having done this. What has helped you get out of this psychological mindset in the past?
4. Humility is described variously as being "earthy," or living in truth, or being self-forgetful. How and when have you experienced these things? Have you ever known a humble person? What was he or she like?
5. Can you think of a concrete example of how you can purposely take the lower place in your life right now?

### **Session Challenge:**

- Give time to the areas in your life in which you love simple things in the way that children do. (i.e., playing an instrument or game, giving freedom to your imagination, anything that makes you curious like a child)

**Closing Prayer:** (Leaders: We recommended offering time during the closing prayer for participants to offer personal intentions.)

*Lord God as we enter into this study of Virtue and Vice, guide us with your Holy Spirit to be truly more aware of ourselves and the areas in our life You would like to re-mold, heal and bring wholeness. Amen*

**{Optional additional Readings}** Read Matthew 5:3, 2 Corinthians 8:9, Proverbs 16:18-19 and CCC 2546.



## Episode III – Envy and Admiration

**\*{Start with reviewing the previous Meetings Challenge or discuss prior to sharing this week's challenge.}**

**Let's Begin:** Think about how the challenge went for the last session. What went well? What was difficult?

### **Opening Prayer:**

Begin with a brief moment of silence shaking off any and all distractions or difficulties of the day and remembering that God is always with us.

Read: **James 4:1-3**

After the Reading Conclude with this prayer:

*Heavenly Father, give us generous hearts, hearts that truly desire the best for EVERYONE. Give us the courage and grace to view the world and the people around us as You view them, Lord. We ask this in the power of the Holy Spirit in the Name of Jesus Christ Your Son. Amen.*

**Video:** Seven Deadly Sins, Seven Lively Virtues Video: Episode III – Envy and Admiration

### **Reflection or Discussion Questions:**

6. Did anything said in this first video resonate with you or truly strike you? Why?
7. Bishop Barron says that, “Envy is sorrow at another person’s good. Or even delight in another’s failure.” Had you thought about it this way before? Can you identify with this definition?
8. Bishop Barron also speaks about how fear is often the root cause of all these sins. How have you seen this play out in your life or in the lives of those closest to you? What are we really most afraid of?
9. Have you ever felt resentment over somebody’s success or joy over his or her failure? If so, do you still struggle with it, or did you defeat that in your heart? How?
10. Scapegoating is a natural byproduct of Envy. What do you think is the antidote to this? How have you/do you stop yourself from getting into this mode?
11. Admiration is the lively virtue to envy. Who do you currently hold up in great admiration? Who do you struggle to admire but know you should?

**Session Challenges:** {Choose one or both}

- Can you think of one person in your life who you need to “go out of your way” to praise?
- If envy creeps into your heart around a particular person, make an intentional effort to pray that God showers them with His abundant blessings and opens your heart to grow in admiration of them.

**Closing Prayer:** (Leaders: We recommended offering time during the closing prayer for participants to offer personal intentions.)

*Lord, through You we recognize that envy can only bring harm and pain. You did not create this feeling and it hurts You to see how we humans let our souls and our thoughts be consumed by envy; even in situations that would seem silly. Let me feel only love, compassion, humility, and joy; for these are the feelings that remind me of Your teachings and thoughts. Amen.*

**{Optional additional Readings}** Isaiah 26:12; Philippians 2:12-13, 1 Corinthians 12:4-31, CCC 2538-2540



## Episode IV – Anger and Forgiveness

**\*{Start with reviewing the previous Meetings Challenge or discuss prior to sharing this week's challenge.}**

**Let's Begin:** Think about how the challenge went for the last session. What went well? What was difficult?

### **Opening Prayer:**

Begin with a brief moment of silence shaking off any and all distractions or difficulties of the day and remembering that God is always with us.

Read: **Ephesians 4:29-32**

After the Reading Conclude with this prayer:

*Heavenly Father, fill our hearts and minds with kindness, tenderness, compassion and forgiveness. May we love and care for those in our lives as we desire to be loved and cared for. Amen.*

**Video:** Seven Deadly Sins, Seven Lively Virtues Video: Episode IV – Anger and Forgiveness

### **Reflection or Discussion Questions:**

12. Did anything said in this video on Anger and Forgiveness resonate with you or truly strike you? Why?
13. St. Thomas Aquinas defined anger as, “the unreasonable desire for vengeance.” Is this similar or different from how you have typically thought of it?
14. Bishop Barron says that, “anger immediately cuts off the organs of communication”. How have you seen this play out?
  - a. In our country?
  - b. In your family life?
  - c. In yourself personally?
15. Bishop Barron says that the antidote is not peace but forgiveness. Was that surprising to you? Bishop Barron defines forgiveness as, “an active engagement with evil in an attempt to undermine it.” Have you experienced times when difficult forgiveness has paid off and dispelled anger?
16. Can you think of places in our culture where the forgiveness of sins is rejected as “weak” or wrong? How can we make it clear that forgiveness and mercy are the ultimate examples of the power of God?
17. Is there anything from today’s session that you can practically apply to your life this day/week/year?

### **Session Challenge:**

- Take a *concrete* step today to heal a broken relationship, such as writing a note or making a phone call. Don't let forgiveness be just a vague abstraction; do something concrete.

**Closing Prayer:** (Leaders: We recommended offering time during the closing prayer for participants to offer personal intentions.)

Close with an Our Father Prayer paying special attention to the words, “Forgive us our trespasses AS WE FORGIVE those who trespass against us.”

**{Optional additional Readings}** Mark 3:1-5; John 2:13-17; Matthew 26:50-54; Luke 22:50-51,

CCC 1765.



## Episode V – Sloth and Zeal

**{Start with reviewing the previous Meetings Challenge or discuss prior to sharing this week's challenge.}**

**Let's Begin:** Think about how the challenge went for the last session. What went well? What was difficult?

### **Opening Prayer:**

Begin with a brief moment of silence shaking off any and all distractions or difficulties of the day and remembering that God is always with us.

Read: **Psalm 73**

After the Reading Conclude with this prayer:

*Heavenly Father, keep me zealous for Your mission and Your will in my life. Help me to never tire or grow weary of the spiritual path You lay before me. Help me to direct my passions rightly toward You and Your way. Amen.*

**Video:** Seven Deadly Sins, Seven Lively Virtues Video: Episode V – Sloth and Zeal

### **Reflection or Discussion Questions:**

18. Did anything said in this video on Sloth and Zeal resonate with you or truly strike you? Why?
19. St. Thomas Aquinas defines Sloth as, “Sorrow in regard to spiritual good.” The inability to muster the energy/interest in advancing in our spiritual life. What do you think of this definition? Have you seen this or felt this yourself?
20. Bishop Barron connects relativism (the tearing down of universal truth) with a spiritual paralysis that is synonymous with Sloth. What do you think about this connection?
21. Bishop Barron says the antidote for Sloth is, “zeal for the mission” and then gives various biblical examples. How do you see this play out in your life and the life of others around you?
22. Another set of antidotes he suggests is to prayerfully ask for your mission, read scripture with the urgent question about your mission, listen to the people around you, and practice the spiritual and corporal works of mercy. Out of these zealous actions which do you gravitate toward and which do you find more difficult?

### **Session Challenge:**

- Re-consider question #5 about antidotes for sloth and put one of the suggestions into concrete action this next week.

**Closing Prayer:** (Leaders: We recommended offering time during the closing prayer for participants to offer personal intentions.)

Read Luke 1:39-45 keeping in mind how Mary “made haste” in her mission.

**{Optional additional Readings} CCC 2733, CCC 2447**



## Episode VI – Avarice and Generosity

**\*{Start with reviewing the previous Meetings Challenge or discuss prior to sharing this week's challenge.}**

**Let's Begin:** Think about how the challenge went for the last session. What went well? What was difficult?

### **Opening Prayer:**

Begin with a brief moment of silence shaking off any and all distractions or difficulties of the day and remembering that God is always with us.

Read: **Luke 16:19-31**

After the Reading Conclude with this prayer:

*Heavenly Father, mold and shape our hearts to be generous like Yours. May we consider more frequently how we can give rather than who or what we can attain and get. Amen.*

**Video:** Seven Deadly Sins, Seven Lively Virtues Video: Episode VI – Avarice and Generosity

### **Reflection or Discussion Questions:**

1. Avarice is often thought of as a sin of the rich and, to be sure, many rich people are afflicted with this temptation. However, a poor person can also be obsessed with money (and with envy of the rich). Have you ever struggled with an inordinate desire for riches? How does our culture encourage the love of money? How can you overcome this temptation?
2. Had you ever considered before the Church's social teaching on wealth and private property? What do you think of the idea that private property is good but with that comes a responsibility for the common good (aka? generosity and sharing)?
3. Have you ever been the recipient of someone's deep generosity and sharing? What was that experience like for you?
4. Has there been a time when you felt called to offer something to someone very generously? What was that experience like for you?
5. When Bishop Barron shares various ideas of practical things you can do to live more generously did anything "tug" at you?

**Session Challenges:** {Choose one or both}

- Clean out your closet and give away something *you like* each month.
- Consider: When shopping for larger ticket items, find the one you want and can afford, and then buy the next one down (i.e., lower in price), and give the dollar difference to the poor.

**Closing Prayer:** (Leaders: We recommended offering time during the closing prayer for participants to offer personal intentions.)

*Displaying the treasures of Your work, Jesus, You invited me to follow You, to sell my goods, to give to the poor, and to completely submit myself to You. Desires for wealth leads to greed, satisfaction never being reached. He who seeks no earthly possessions Is free of all avarice aspirations. Jesus, edify my weak human nature, to resist unnecessary commodities, those classified as evident luxury. May I subdue all greedy tendencies with the help of Your grace! Amen.*

### **{Optional additional Readings}**

Matthew 6:19-34; 1 Timothy 6:6-10; 2 Corinthians 8:1-15; CCC 1906-1909



## Episode VII – Gluttony and Asceticism

**\*{Start with reviewing the previous Meetings Challenge or discuss prior to sharing this week's challenge.}**

**Let's Begin:** Think about how the challenge went for the last session. What went well? What was difficult?

### **Opening Prayer:**

Begin with a brief moment of silence shaking off any and all distractions or difficulties of the day and remembering that God is always with us.

Read: **Matthew 6:16-21**

After the Reading Conclude with this prayer:

*Heavenly Father, we can fool ourselves and try to fill up on finite goods when only Your infinite heart will suffice. Keep us free from addiction and attachment to the good things You have created. May we deeply know that only YOU will fill us and content us. Amen.*

**Video:** Seven Deadly Sins, Seven Lively Virtues Video: Episode VII – Gluttony & Asceticism

### **Reflection or Discussion Questions:**

1. Did anything said in this video on Gluttony & Asceticism resonate with you or truly strike you? Why?
2. Bishop Barron expresses that Gluttony and Lust are less deadly than the other deadly sins. Why do you think that is? What do you think this means for our own lives and our mercy towards others who struggle with these sins?
3. “At bottom, all psychological problems are spiritual problems.” – Carl Jung. What do you think of this quote?
4. Gluttony is seeking to fill our infinite desire with something finite. This doesn't always mean food and drink. What finite things do you feel most tempted to use in filling your infinite desire?
5. Bishop Barron compares asceticism to using a Stairmaster so that you can become healthier. In the spiritual life, we are likewise called to asceticism to discipline our appetites and become spiritually healthier by opening our lives to God. Have you ever tried an ascetic practice such as fasting? What were the benefits you gained?
6. What asceticism actions do you think would be helpful for your spiritual life now? Were there any suggestions that Bishop Barron mentions that you think would be good to adopt?

### **Session Challenge:**

- Choose a serious fast from a food or drink you love dearly this week. Don't fast simply as self-punishment. As you fast, feel that hunger, and then treat it as a kind of sacrament of your higher-order hunger for the Divine. Make the connection in your prayer, such as saying “Lord, I know this is symbolic of my hunger and thirst for you.”

**Closing Prayer:** (Leaders: We recommended offering time during the closing prayer for participants to offer personal intentions.)

*Help me I pray, to have the resolve to eat and drink wisely and in a manner that is honoring to You, for the Bible tells us that whether we eat or drink, we are to do everything for Your honor and glory. Help me to honor You in all I do and especially in my eating. This I ask in Jesus' name. Amen.*

**{Optional additional Readings} Isaiah 58**



## Episode VIII – Lust and Chastity

**\*{Start with reviewing the previous Meetings Challenge or discuss prior to sharing this week's challenge.}**

**Let's Begin:** Think about how the challenge went for the last session. What went well? What was difficult?

### **Opening Prayer:**

Begin with a brief moment of silence shaking off any and all distractions or difficulties of the day and remembering that God is always with us.

Read: **Matthew 5:27-30**

After the Reading Conclude with this prayer:

*Heavenly Father, give us the grace and strength to love people and never “use” them. Give us chaste eyes and hearts that are always ready to view people how You view them and to love them as You love them. Amen.*

**Video:** Seven Deadly Sins, Seven Lively Virtues Video: Episode VIII – Lust and Chastity

### **Reflection or Discussion Questions:**

1. Did anything said in this video on Lust & Chastity resonate with you or truly strike you? Why?
2. Why do you think that we see Lust as so deadly or worse in our culture rather than pride or envy?
3. Had you ever considered the definition of lust as, “the using or objectification of another person for your own personal sexual pleasure?” How does this definition change your understanding of human relationships in general?
4. “Unless you can turn to the person next you and say, ‘I don’t need you’, you can’t love that person.” This is quite a line. What do you think/feel about this?
5. St. John Paul II warned that people can commit the sin of lust even *within* marriage. What do you think he meant?
6. Bishop Barron mentions that fear is what drives us to vice, sin, filling our own ego, etc. How can we become free and more fearless?

**Session Challenges:** {Choose one, two, or all}

- If you are using pornography or are involved in some manipulative, objectifying sexual relationship, actively seek help. These websites may be helpful:
  - <https://media.ascensionpress.com/video/three-practical-tips-to-quit-porn/>
  - <https://www.covenanteyes.com/2021/05/03/books-on-porn-addiction/>
  - <https://integrityrestored.com/>
- Seek help if you are addicted to sex in any way. Refer to information found here to begin: <https://www.sa.org/> or <https://www.catholicbridge.com/lust-recovery/index.php>
- Examine the quality of your relationships, especially the most intimate ones. To what degree is “need” playing a dominant role? Do you really, unselfishly “will the good” of the one you love?

**Closing Prayer:** (Leaders: We recommended offering time during the closing prayer for participants to offer personal intentions.) **Prayer of St. Thomas Aquinas for Purity**

*Dear Jesus, I know that every perfect gift, and especially that of chastity, depends on the power of Your providence. Without You a mere creature can do nothing. Therefore, I beg You, to defend by Your grace the chastity and purity of my body and soul. And if I have ever sensed or imagined anything that could stain my chastity and purity, blot it out, Supreme Lord of my powers, that I may advance with a pure heart in Your love and service, offering myself on the most pure altar of Your divinity all the days of my life. Amen.*

**{Optional additional Research}** [1 Corinthians 6:12-20](#); [1 John 2:15-17](#); [CCC 2392-2400](#);

<https://www.usccb.org/issues-and-action/human-life-and-dignity/pornography/wash-me-thoroughly-healing-from-pornography-use-and-addiction>