

# Real+True

PILLAR IV

UNIT 37 GUIDE

OVERVIEW

The *Catechism* is not a textbook, a collection of ideas, or a set of rules. Rather, the *Catechism* is the faithful echo of a God who wishes to reveal himself to us and desires us to respond. Our mission is to hand down and pass along the gift of our faith by creating beautiful, captivating, and relevant content inspired by the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*. And we are making this content in multiple languages and accessible for free to people all over the world.

The content, structure, and methodology of Real + True takes inspiration and direction from the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* and sound, evangelizing catechesis. Catechesis is inextricably intertwined with evangelization, and its primary aim is to put people into intimacy and communion with Jesus Christ. (Catechesi Tradendae, 5)

The word “catechesis” comes from the Greek word that means “to echo”. This simple guide is designed to help you understand the structure of our content and better use it to echo the teachings of Jesus yourself. The structure takes inspiration from the catechetical methodology, the pedagogy of the *Catechism*, and the pedagogy of God.

## THERE ARE FOUR PARTS TO THE CATECHISM. THE FOUR PARTS, OR PILLARS, ARE:

- The Profession of Faith (Pillar I)
- The Celebration of the Christian Mystery (Pillar II)
- Life in Christ (Pillar III)
- Christian Prayer (Pillar IV)

Each pillar is divided into 12 units. In total, this project will include 48 units that will cover the entire *Catechism of the Catholic Church* (CCC). Every month, a new unit will be published.

The twelve units for pillar four and the paragraphs of the *Catechism* they cover are:

- UNIT 37** Prayer is a personal relationship. (2558-2567)
- UNIT 38** Prayer as covenant relationship and 5 ways of prayer (2568-2649)
- UNIT 39** The wellsprings of prayer (2650-2696)
- UNIT 40** Prayer is a daily walk with Jesus. (2697- 2758)
- UNIT 41** Jesus teaches us to pray: “Our Father” (2759-2806)
- UNIT 42** Prayer in the name of Jesus. (2807-2815)
- UNIT 43** Prayer invites God’s kingdom. (2816-2821)
- UNIT 44** God’s will in our lives. (2822- 2827)
- UNIT 45** Praying to God for our needs. (2828-2837)
- UNIT 46** Prayer, mercy, forgiveness. (2838-2845)
- UNIT 47** Battling temptation, sin, and evil through prayer. (2846-2854)
- UNIT 48** The Our Father, a summary of the Good News. Amen. (2855-2865)

## EACH UNIT THEN CONSISTS OF THE FOLLOWING VIDEOS:

**Proclamation**

**Explanation**

**Connection**

There are a few characteristics of the *Catechism's* approach and structure that are worth mentioning. The *Catechism* is trinitarian, meaning we view all of the faith through the lens of the Trinity. The *Catechism* is also christocentric, meaning its focus or center is Jesus. The *Catechism* is kerygmatic, meaning it is animated by the saving message of Jesus Christ, the Good News. The *Catechism* has a missionary dimension, meaning it does not presume faith in those that would read it but seeks to evangelize through its presentation of the faith. And the *Catechism* is systematic, progressive, and organic, meaning the structure itself is a catechesis. The structure for each unit was developed using these characteristics and the Ecclesial Method, proposed by Msgr. Francis Kelley (author of *The Mystery We Proclaim*).

While each video is designed to be able to stand on its own, there is some benefit in watching them in order, and they do build on each other.

### Proclamation Video

The first video is meant to rouse the spiritual curiosity that allows us to be prepared to hear the Gospel message. These videos explore the world and our human experience, and the hope is that these videos will be especially attractive to those who might be less interested in a video that directly addresses the doctrines of the faith.

### Explanation Video

The second video breaks open the content of the passage of the *Catechism* being addressed in the unit. This video is much more straightforward and is guided by a discussion back and forth between two voices who are exploring the truths of the faith.

### Connection Video

The connection video is meant to be a real-life application of the passage from the *Catechism*, and answer common questions related to this unit's content. The tone of these videos are often playful, and it is meant to connect with the audience on a more practical level that is relevant to their lives.

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## UNIT 37: PRAYER IS A PERSONAL RELATIONSHIP. | CCC 2558-2567

THESIS: WE'RE INVITED TO LIVE AND GROW IN A PERSONAL RELATIONSHIP WITH THE LIVING GOD THROUGH PRAYER.

### Proclamation Video: Thoughts & Prayers: Empty Gesture or True Connection?

#### Discussion Questions:

- What did you find particularly striking in the video?
- What does prayer mean to you? How has your understanding of prayer evolved over time?
- In what ways do you think prayer can influence our actions and decisions in response to tragedies, challenges, or suffering?
- What do you think about the criticism that 'thoughts and prayers' are not enough in times of crisis? Do you agree or disagree? Why?
- What is the difference between prayer that is sincere and meaningful and prayer that is just empty words?
- What role do you think prayer should play in public life, especially among political leaders?
- Have you ever experienced a situation where prayer led you to a deeper understanding or change in perspective?
- In what ways can we as a community support each other spiritually and practically during times of tragedy?

### Explanation Video: How to Experience a Deep, Personal Relationship with God Through Prayer

#### Discussion Questions:

- What stood out to you from the video?
- How would you describe prayer to someone who has never prayed before? How do you think your concept of prayer shapes your relationship with God?
- In what ways can viewing prayer as a relationship change how we experience it and approach it in our daily lives?
- How does the idea that "prayer doesn't just help our relationship with God, prayer is our relationship with God" challenge or affirm your current understanding of prayer?
- What can we learn from the lives of the saints, like St. Therese of Lisieux, about cultivating a deeper relationship with God through prayer?
- How do you experience prayer in your own life? Is it like a conversation or something else?
- How does the concept of prayer as communion with God influence the way you approach challenges or joys in your life?
- In what ways can we cultivate a deeper intimacy with God through prayer, similar to deepening a relationship with a close friend or spouse?
- How might your prayer life change if you focused more on growing in intimacy with God rather than simply asking for things or following a routine?

## Connection Video: Struggling to pray? This might help.

### **Discussion Questions:**

- What was something that struck you in the video?
- What are some things you initially didn't like but grew to appreciate over time? How does this relate to your experience with prayer?
- How might we deepen our relationship with God by treating prayer as a conversation with a living God who hears us and wants to have a relationship with us?
- How do you think spending time in silence or in the presence of the Eucharist can impact your prayer life?
- What role do images or artwork play in helping you connect with Jesus on a deeper level?
- How can keeping a prayer journal help you track and deepen your relationship with God? Do you have any experience with journaling in prayer? How did journaling enhance your experience of prayer?
- Have you ever experienced a moment in prayer where you felt God was speaking to you? How did that experience shape your relationship with Him?
- How can we create "history" with Jesus in our daily lives, and why is this important for growing intimacy with God?

# General Recommendations

## **FRIENDS AND FAMILIES:**

These videos are great discussion starters with coworkers, family members, and friends. You can easily share one over social media or by text. Say a prayer and ask the Holy Spirit to inspire you and guide you on who to send a video to. Follow up later by asking what they thought of the video and if there were any thoughts or questions it stirred up. Practice spiritual accompaniment by using active listening and refraining from correcting or teaching.

## **PARISH SETTINGS, SCHOOLS, YOUTH, YOUNG ADULT, AND COLLEGE CAMPUS MINISTRY:**

These videos work great as a series for social media posts or email newsletters. Be sure to include a link for people to dive deeper into the rest of the content. In more formal catechetical settings, these videos are best used as supplemental discussion starters, or to recap a lesson. Try using these to open a lesson and dive right into reactions and discussion. For younger students, or those who are not active disciples, try the proclamation videos as a way into the content. For those who might be new or active disciples, try using the proclamation, explanation, and connection videos.

## **CATECHISTS:**

The *Catechism's* structure is itself a teaching. And the method and content of these videos is a great way to discuss with catechists how to effectively accomplish an “evangelizing catechesis”. By watching the unit videos together while reading the *Catechism* paragraphs, you can then discuss with your catechists what they noticed about how the content is presented. What was highlighted, and what was left out? What does this video have to do with Jesus and our relationship with him? How is this video trying to lead people into a deeper curiosity and openness to the *Catechism's* content? The podcast episode of each unit often dives into this “behind the scenes” approach and can be useful for catechists and catechist training.

We hope and pray that these videos will find people who are curious about what the Church teaches and about Jesus. We pray that the proclamation videos rouse a spiritual curiosity about the world and what it means to be human. We pray the explanation and connection videos would present the contents of our faith in a way that is relevant to their lives, perhaps in a way they've never heard before. We hope that many may find these videos to be useful conversation starters to journey with others who are spiritually curious or seeking truth.

We also hope and pray that Real + True helps others rediscover the “pulsating heart of the *Catechism*,” as Cardinal Raniero Cantalamessa stated in his sermon on the *Catechism* to the papal household, a heart that has a face and a name – Jesus Christ.

Visit [realtrue.org](https://realtrue.org) for more videos and resources.