

INTRODUCTION

Welcome to Fr. Robert Barron's enlightening study on sin and virtue. Over the course of this study, we will be taking a look at what Catholic tradition calls the Seven Deadly Sins and contrasting them with what Father Barron refers to as the Seven Lively Virtues.

This guide is designed to help you apply to your life what you will learn from Father Barron's look at the Catholic tradition. The aim is to increase understanding, promote reflection, and encourage practical action. You will have the chance to dig into the Catholic tradition and grapple with Scripture and the Church's teaching as it is summarized in *The Catechism of the Catholic Church*. You will also be able to use the materials provided in Fr. Barron's DVD in order to assess and enhance your life as a disciple of Jesus Christ. The guide is built around QUESTIONS FOR UNDERSTANDING and QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION, which will reinforce the main points made in each section on a Deadly Sin and its corresponding Lively Virtue.

Throughout the study, you will be asked to reference different Bible verses and passages. We recommend the *New American Bible* or the *Revised Standard Version*, or you can also use another acceptable Catholic translation. To answer the questions, you will need to refer to the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, which can be purchased at your local bookstore or found online at: www.scborromeo.org/ccc.htm.

So without further ado, let's take a look at Fr. Barron's introductory remarks and then consider the questions on the following pages.

QUESTIONS FOR UNDERSTANDING

1. Read the *Catechism of the Catholic Church (CCC)* paragraphs 1849-1851 and 1866. What is sin? What are the Seven Deadly Sins?
2. Read CCC 1803 and Philippians 4:8. What is virtue? Why is it important in the spiritual life?
3. Read Wisdom 1. What are the qualities of wisdom? What are the qualities of the wise or righteous person? What are the qualities of the unwise fool?
4. Read CCC 759. As a sheer, gratuitous gift, God intends that you exist and share in his divine life. What response does this require from us?

QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION

1. The startling proposition, "God does not need you" affects different people in different ways. Some people might feel relief. Others might feel resentment. Still others might feel puzzlement. What is your response to that proposition?
2. St. Thomas Aquinas says that love is willing the good of the other as other." Can you think of examples of this that you have witnessed either in your own life or in the lives of others? Can you describe an experience of having been a conduit for God's love?
3. Fr. Barron also warns of the opposite danger of a "love" that is really "indirect egotism." Can you think of times in your life when you have "loved" somebody in order to get him/her to do something for you and not because you actually cared about his/her good? Or, how about a time when your relationship with a person took precedence over your relationship with God? How did you recognize and overcome temptations like this?
4. Fr. Barron describes fear as being at the root of all sin. Have you ever experienced fear working against the virtue of love in your life? How can fear lead you to forget the love of God and put your trust somewhere else?
5. What makes sin deadly? How can God's anger be good news for us? Have you ever experience sin's killing effect? Have you ever seen God's liberation from that deadliness at work in your life? What was that like?