

# Are your friends making you a better disciple of Christ?

**Headline:** There is a study which shows that it's physically healthier to smoke 15 cigarettes a day than to be lonely. Friendship is essential for your spiritual and emotional health. Come meet with other like-minded fathers to share scripture, prayers, and thoughts on how to be better men and fathers.

## Objective:

It's important to be connected with others to increase your joy. There is a study which shows that it's physically healthier to smoke 15 cigarettes a day than to be lonely. Friendship is essential for your spiritual health. Sequoias can grow to be 300 feet tall and live for thousands of years, strong enough to withstand fire and wind. However, their roots don't go downward for strength, they go hundreds of feet wide, intertwining with their neighbors to be able to withstand life's challenges. You're here attending Fathers Team and that's a great start, now can you step it up and find a small group to meet with to share struggles and successes with your faith, family, and life?

**Song Suggestion:** The Servant Song

## Bible and Catechism Readings:

### Proverbs 13:20

Whoever walks with the wise becomes wise, but the companion of fools will suffer harm.

### 1Corinthians 15:33-34

Do not be deceived: "Bad company ruins good morals." Wake up from your drunken stupor, as is right, and do not go on sinning. For some have no knowledge of God. I say this to your shame.

### Paragraph 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.

### Paragraph 2347

The virtue of chastity blossoms in *friendship*. It shows the disciple how to follow and imitate him who has chosen us as his friends, who has given himself totally to us and allows us to participate in his divine estate. Chastity is a promise of immortality.

Chastity is expressed notably in *friendship with one's neighbor*. Whether it develops between persons of the same or opposite sex, friendship represents a great good for all. It leads to spiritual communion.

## Saint:

St. John the Apostle, the son of Zebedee and Salome, was one of the Twelve Apostles of Jesus. John was called to be an Apostle by our Lord in the first year of His public ministry. He is considered the same person as John the Evangelist, John of Patmos and the Beloved Disciple. John's older brother was St. James the Great, another one of Jesus' Twelve Apostles. Jesus referred to the brothers as "Boanerges," meaning "sons of thunder." John is believed to be the longest living apostle and the only not to die a martyr's death.

St. John is the patron saint of love, loyalty, friendships, and authors. He is often depicted in art as the author of the Gospel with an eagle, symbolizing "the height he rose to in his gospel."

[https://www.catholic.org/saints/saint.php?saint\\_id=228](https://www.catholic.org/saints/saint.php?saint_id=228)

**Vignette:** – Eric has maintained long-standing friendships with several men from college. They play golf on the weekends and share beers, stories, and fantasy football leagues with enthusiasm. He has noticed that many of them have stopped going to church and a couple have struggled with infidelity and divorce. Eric struggles with how to maintain and improve his Catholic faith while his friends do more to hinder and tempt him than support him. He would love to talk about his faith with them but worries that there is too little of substance that binds him and his friends any more.

### **Questions for Large and Small Group Discussion:**

1. Who are the people you spend the most time with? Can you think of ways they reflect Christ or do you find yourself making excuses for their behaviors?
2. Are you a person others see reflecting Christ, even in the way you play golf, drink beers, or share hobbies with them?
3. Do you have friends that you meet with often? Can you talk to these friends about family, faith, and life goals?

### **Resources:**

Hallow App, Chris Stefanick – **The Power Of Friends** <https://hallow.app.link/9uThiST5hVb>

### **Step it up!:**

1. Write down some of your most important friendships. Reflect on some of the activities and conversations you have shared with them. Pray about whether Christ is important in those relationships.
2. Find one or a few men in the parish or fathers team that you could meet with for coffee or a beer on occasion to have discussions about family and faith and pray for each other.

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